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THE POETICAL WORKS OF  
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY



THE POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

WITH INTRODUCTION  
BY  
DR. RICHARD GARNETT

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
TO HARRIET *****	I
QUEEN MAB	I
ALASTOR; or, THE SPIRIT OF SOLITUDE	36
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM: A POEM IN TWELVE CANTOS	49
Preface	49
Dedication: To Mary	54
Canto I	57
Canto II	68
Canto III	78
Canto IV	84
Canto V	91
Canto VI	104
Canto VII	115
Canto VIII	122
Canto IX	128
Canto X.	135
Canto XI	145
Canto XII	150
PROMETHEUS UNBOUND: A LYRICAL DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS	159
Preface	159
Act I	162
Act II	175
Act III	186
Act IV	195
THE CENCI: A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS	205
Dedication to Leigh Hunt, Esq.	205
Preface	205
Act I	209
Act II	216
Act III	222
Act IV	231
Act V	240
HELLAS: A LYRICAL DRAMA	251

	PAGE
ŒDIPUS TYRANNUS; or, SWELLFOOT THE TYRANT: A TRAGEDY	
IN TWO ACTS . . . . .	271.
Advertisement. . . . .	271
Act I . . . . .	271
Act II . . . . .	279
EARLY POEMS . . . . .	285
A SUMMER-EVENING CHURCHYARD . . . . .	285
MUTABILITY . . . . .	286
ON DEATH . . . . .	286
TO COLERIDGE . . . . .	287
TO WORDSWORTH . . . . .	287
LINES: "THE COLD EARTH SLEPT BELOW" . . . . .	287
STANZAS: APRIL, 1814 . . . . .	288
FEELINGS OF A REPUBLICAN ON THE FALL OF BONAPARTE . . . . .	288
POEMS WRITTEN IN 1816. . . . .	289
THE SUNSET . . . . .	289
HYMN TO INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY . . . . .	290
MONT BLANC . . . . .	291
POEMS WRITTEN IN 1817. . . . .	291
PRINCE ATHANASE . . . . .	291
FRAGMENTS OF PRINCE ATHANASE . . . . .	296
Fragment I . . . . .	296
Fragment II . . . . .	297
Fragment III . . . . .	298
Fragment IV . . . . .	299
MARIANNE'S DREAM. . . . .	299
DEATH . . . . .	301
TO CONSTANTIA, SINGING . . . . .	302
TO CONSTANTIA . . . . .	302
SONNET: OZYMANDIAS . . . . .	302
TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR . . . . .	303
LINES TO A CRITIC . . . . .	304
LINES: "THAT TIME IS DEAD FOR EVIL, CHILD" . . . . .	304
ON FANNY GODWIN. . . . .	304
POEMS WRITTEN IN 1818 . . . . .	305
ADVERTISEMENT TO ROSALIND AND HELEN . . . . .	305
ROSAIND AND HELEN . . . . .	305
LINES WRITTEN AMONG THE EUGANEAN HILLS . . . . .	322
JULIAN AND MADDALO . . . . .	325
THE WOODMAN AND THE NIGHTINGALE . . . . .	336
MISERY: A FRAGMENT . . . . .	347
TO MARY——. . . . .	338
PASSAGE OF THE APENNINES . . . . .	338
ON A FADED VIOLET . . . . .	338
STANZAS, WRITTEN IN DEJECTION, NEAR NAPLES . . . . .	339
SONG FOR TASSO . . . . .	339
THE PAST . . . . .	340
MAZENGI . . . . .	340
SONNET: "LIFT NOT THE PAINTED VEIL WHICH THOSE WHO LIVE" . . . . .	341

# CONTENTS

vii

	PAGE
POEMS WRITTEN IN 1819 . . . . .	341
THE MASQUE OF ANARCHY . . . . .	341
PETER BELL THE THIRD . . . . .	346
DEDICATION: TO THOMAS BROWN, ESQ. . . . .	346
PROLOGUE . . . . .	347
Part the First: Death . . . . .	348
Part the Second: The Devil . . . . .	349
Part the Third: Hell . . . . .	350
Part the Fourth: Sin . . . . .	351
Part the Fifth: Grace . . . . .	353
Part the Sixth: Damnation . . . . .	354
Part the Seventh: Double Damnation . . . . .	357
LINES WRITTEN DURING THE CASTLERAGH ADMINISTRATION . . . . .	358
SONG, TO THE MEN OF ENGLAND . . . . .	359
ENGLAND IN 1819 . . . . .	359
SIMILES, FOR TWO POLITICAL CHARACTERS IN 1819 . . . . .	359
GOD SAVE THE QUEEN . . . . .	360
AN ODE, TO THE ASSERTORS OF LIBERTY. . . . .	360
ODE TO HEAVEN . . . . .	361
ODE TO THE WEST WIND . . . . .	361
AN EXHORTATION . . . . .	363
LINES WRITTEN FOR MISS SOPHIA STACEY . . . . .	363
ON THE MEDUSA OF LEONARDO DA VINCI . . . . .	363
TO WILLIAM SHELLEY . . . . .	364
 POEMS WRITTEN IN 1820 . . . . .	 365
THE SENSITIVE PLANT . . . . .	365
Part I . . . . .	365
Part II . . . . .	367
Part III . . . . .	368
Conclusion . . . . .	370
A VISION OF THE SEA . . . . .	370
THE CLOUD . . . . .	373
TO A SKYLARK . . . . .	374
TO —: "I FEAR THY KISSES, GENTLE MAIDEN" . . . . .	376
LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY. . . . .	376
ODE TO LIBERTY . . . . .	376
ARETHUSA . . . . .	381
HYMN OF APOLLO . . . . .	382
HYMN OF PAN . . . . .	383
THE QUESTION . . . . .	383
THE TWO SPIRITS . . . . .	384
THE WANING MOON . . . . .	385
SONG OF PROSERPINE . . . . .	385
LETTER TO MARIA GISBORNE . . . . .	385
TO MARY . . . . .	390
THE WITCH OF ATLAS . . . . .	391
DEATH . . . . .	403
TO THE MOON. . . . .	403
ODE TO NAPLES . . . . .	404
SUMMER AND WINTER . . . . .	406



	PAGE
LINES TO A REVIEWER . . . . .	407
AUTUMN . . . . .	407
THE WORLD'S WANDERERS . . . . .	407
LIBERTY . . . . .	407
AN ALLEGORY . . . . .	408
THE TOWER OF FAMINE . . . . .	408
SONNET: "YE HASTEN TO THE DEAD!" . . . . .	409
TIME LONG PAST . . . . .	409
POEMS WRITTEN IN 1821 . . . . .	409
EPIPSYCHIDION . . . . .	409
ADONAIS . . . . .	420
TO EMILIA VIVIANI . . . . .	431
FROM THE ARABIC: AN IMITATION . . . . .	431
TIME . . . . .	431
TO NIGHT . . . . .	431
A FRAGMENT: "AS A VIOLET'S GENTLE EYE"	432
LINES: "FAR, FAR AWAY, O YE" . . . . .	432
THE FUGITIVES . . . . .	432
TO —: "MUSIC, WHEN SOFT VOICES DIL"	433
TO MARY WOOLSTONECRAFT GODWIN . . . . .	433
SONG: "RARELY, RARELY, COMEST THOU"	433
EVENING: PONT A MARE, PISA . . . . .	434
LINES ON THE DEATH OF NAPOLEON . . . . .	434
MUTABILITY . . . . .	435
SONNET: POLITICAL GREATNESS . . . . .	435
LINES: "IF I WALK IN AUTUMN'S EVEN"	435
GINEVRA . . . . .	435
THE DIRGE . . . . .	439
TO-MORROW . . . . .	439
THE BOAT: ON THE SERCHIO . . . . .	439
THE AZIOLA . . . . .	440
A LAMENT . . . . .	441
TO EDWARD WILLIAMS . . . . .	441
REMEMBRANCE . . . . .	442
THE INDIAN SERENADE . . . . .	442
TO —: "ONE WORD IS TOO OFTEN PROFANED"	442
MUSIC . . . . .	442
TO —: "WHEN PASSION'S TRANCE IS OVERPAST"	443
A BRIDAL SONG . . . . .	443
A FRAGMENT . . . . .	443
GOOD-NIGHT . . . . .	444
DIRGE FOR THE YEAR . . . . .	444
POEMS WRITTEN IN 1822 . . . . .	444
THE ZUCCA . . . . .	444
THE MAGNETIC LADY TO HER PATIENT . . . . .	446
LINES: "WHEN THE LAMP IS SHATTERED"	446
WITH A GUITAR, TO JANE . . . . .	447
FRAGMENTS OF AN UNFINISHED DRAMA . . . . .	447
A SONG: "A WIDOW BIRD SATE MOURNING"	449

# CONTENTS

ix

	PAGE
TO JANE: THE INVITATION . . . . .	449
THE ISLE . . . . .	450
TO JANE: THE RECOLLECTION. • . . . .	450
A DIRGE . . . . .	451
THE TRIUMPH OF LIFE . . . . .	451
TO JANE: "THE KEEN STARS WERE TWINKLING" . . . . .	462
LYNES WRITTEN IN THE BAY OF LERICI . . . . .	462

## FRAGMENTS

I. To —: "HERE, MY DEAR FRIEND, IS A NEW BOOK FOR YOU" . . . . .	463
II. To WILLIAM SHELLEY . . . . .	464
III. "AND WHO FEELS DISCORD NOW OR SORROW;" . . . . .	464
IV. "A GENTLE STORY OF TWO LOVERS YOUNG" . . . . .	464
V. "I AM DRUNK WITH THE HONEY WINE" . . . . .	464
VI. "YE GENTLE VISITATIONS OF CALM THOUGHT" . . . . .	465
VII. "THE WORLD IS DREARY" . . . . .	465
VIII. "MY DEAREST MARY, WHEREFORE HAST THOU" . . . . .	465
IX. "WHEN A LOVER CLASPS HIS FAIREST," . . . . .	465
X. "ONE SONG OF THEE WHO LEFT THE TALE UNTOLD," . . . . .	465
XI. "AND WHERE IS TRUTH? ON TOMBS? FOR SUCH TO THEE" . . . . .	465
XII. "IN THE CAVE WHICH WILDS WEEDS COVER" . . . . .	465
XIII. "THERE IS A WARM AND GENTLE ATMOSPHERE" . . . . .	465
XIV. "HOW SWEET IT IS TO SIT AND READ THE TALES" . . . . .	465
XV. "WHAT MEN GAIN FAIRLY—THAT THEY SHOULD POSSESS" . . . . .	466
XVI. "WAVE THE SERPENT NOT—LEST HE" . . . . .	466
XVII. "ROME HAS FALLEN, YE SEE IT LYING" . . . . .	466
XVIII. "THE FITFUL ALTERNATIONS OF THE RAIN" . . . . .	466
XIX. "I WOULD NOT BE A KING—ENOUGH" . . . . .	466
XX. "O THOU IMMORTAL DEITY" . . . . .	466
XXI. "HE WANDERS, LIKE A DAY-APPEARING DREAM," . . . . .	466
XXII. ON KEATS, WHO DESIRED THAT ON HIS TOMB SHOULD BE INSCRIBED—	466
XXIII. "THE RUDE WIND IS SINGING" . . . . .	466
XXIV. "WHAT ART THOU, PRESUMPTUOUS, WHO PROFANEST" . . . . .	466
XXV. "WHEN SOFT WINDS AND SUNNY SKIES" . . . . .	467
XXVI. "THE BABE IS AT PEACE WITHIN THE WOMB" . . . . .	467
XXVII. EPITAPH . . . . .	467
XXVIII. OTHO . . . . .	467
XXIX. "O MIGHTY MIND, IN WHOSE DEEP STREAM THIS AGE" . . . . .	467
XXX. "SILENCE! OH WELL ARE DEATH AND SLEEP AND THOU" . . . . .	467
XXXI. "THE FIERCE BEASTS OF THE WOODS AND WILDERNESSES" . . . . .	468
XXXII. "MY HEAD IS WILD WITH WEEPING FOR A GRIEF" . . . . .	468
XXXIII. "FLOURISHING VINE, WHOSE KINDLING CLUSTERS GLOW" . . . . .	468
XXXIV. SCENE FROM TASSO . . . . .	468
XXXV. "SUCH HOPE AS IS THE SICK DESPAIR OF GOOD" . . . . .	469
XXXVI. "MY HEAD IS HEAVY, MY LIMBS ARE WEARY" . . . . .	469
XXXVII. PROLOGUE TO HELLAS . . . . .	469
XXXVIII. SONNET TO BYRON . . . . .	472
XXXIX. "I FAINT! I PERISH WITH MY LOVE! I GROW" . . . . .	472
XL. "GREAT SPIRIT WHOM THE SEA OF BOUNDLESS THOUGHT" . . . . .	472
XLI. "FAINT WITH LOVE, THE LADY OF THE SOUTH" . . . . .	472
XLII. CHARLES THE FIRST . . . . .	472

	PAGE
XLIII. "WE MEET NOT AS WE PARTED;"	486
XLIV. "BRIGHT WANDERER, FAIR COQUETTE OF HEAVEN"	486
TRANSLATIONS	486
HYMNS OF HOMER	486
HYMN TO MERCURY	486
TO CASTOR AND POLLUX	501
TO MINERVA	501
TO THE SUN	501
TO THE MOON	502
TO THE EARTH, MOTHER OF ALL,	502
THE CYCLOPS	503
EPIGRAMS	515
SPIRIT OF PLATO	515
FROM THE GREEK	515
TO STELLA	515
FROM PLATO	515
SONNETS FROM THE GREEK OF MOSCHUS	515
SONNET FROM THE ITALIAN OF DANTE	516
SCENES FROM THE MAGICO PRODIGIOSO OF CALDERON	516
SCENES FROM THE FAUST OF GOETHE	527

## PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

LIKE Spenser, Milton, and a few others among our older poets, Percy Bysshe Shelley possessed the faculty of investing whatever he wrote and whatever he did with the quality of interest. From the time of his mastering the art of poetical expression there are no tame or dull passages in his verse : from the time of his involuntary emancipation from the restraints of the University there are no prosaic incidents in his life. It is consequently impossible to present within a narrow compass so complete a view either of his history or his works as in the case of authors whose lives and writings are only episodically interesting ; many criticisms must be withheld, and many incidents must be omitted, or dismissed with brief mention.

He was born at Field Place, Warnham, near Horsham, in Sussex, on August 4, 1792 ; the same day as two famous pulpit-orators, Edward Irving and Friedrich Mallet, whose characters bore no inconsiderable resemblance to his own. He was in the line of succession to the baronetcy which his father, Timothy Shelley, afterwards enjoyed. The grandfather, Sir Bysshe, the first baronet, who had made the family fortune by two wealthy marriages, was leading a sequestered life at Horsham, "a man of noble and aristocratic presence," but homely if not sordid in his habits, and mainly occupied in augmenting the wealth which an expenditure of eighty thousand pounds upon an impossible mansion had not seriously impaired. Timothy, his son, was neither an aristocrat, nor sordid. A country squire, badly educated, and singularly confined in his way of thinking and expressing himself, he conveyed no moral or intellectual trait to his son, who undoubtedly inherited something from the handsome, adventurous, speculative, if whimsical and rapacious grandfather. Of his mother, a Miss Pilfold, so little is known that it cannot be affirmed whether he derived anything from her beyond the good looks which were even more conspicuous in some of her younger children. The family was one of ancient and honourable standing, divided into several branches, long settled in Sussex. At the time of which we write, it had much social and political connexion with the Duke of Norfolk, who had procured Sir Bysshe his baronetcy.

At six Shelley received lessons from the parish clergyman ; at ten he was sent to Sion House Academy, a private school at Brentford, kept by Dr. Greenlaw ; at twelve he was transferred to Eton. He was then, mentally and physically, much what he continued to be, "a boy," says a schoolfellow, "of studious and meditative habits, averse to all games and sports, and a great reader of novels and romances. He was a thin, slight lad, with remarkably lustrous eyes, light hair, and a very peculiar shrill voice and laugh." "Like a girl in boy's clothes," says another schoolfellow. Boys of this shy and sensitive type are naturally objects of persecution to the stupid

and cruel among their schoolfellows, "the unguided tyrannous cubs," as Carlyle denominated those who were hunting him about the time that Sion House and Eton were hunting "Mad Shelley." Shelley has consigned his grievances to immortal verse in some stanzas of the dedication of his *Revolt of Islam*, and seems to ascribe his awakening to a perception of his mission on earth to the oppression which he then underwent :

I do remember well the hour which burst  
My spirit's sleep. A fresh May-dawn it was,  
When I walked forth upon the glittering grass,  
And wept, I knew not why : until there rose  
From the near schoolroom voices that, alas !  
Were but an echo from a world of woes—  
The harsh and grating strife of tyrants and of foes.

And then I clasped my hands and looked around ;  
But none was near to mock my streaming eyes,  
Which poured their warm drops on the sunny ground ;  
So without shame I spake : I will be wise,  
And just, and free, and mild, if in me lies  
Such power, for I grow weary to behold  
The selfish and the strong still tyrannize  
Without reproach or check ! I then controlled  
My tears, my heart grew calm, and I was meek and bold.

Shelley's life at Eton, however, was not all unhappiness. He had several friends, who have recorded their recollections of him in affectionate terms ; though he was never a very accurate scholar, the ordinary lessons were in general child's play to his quick intellect, and he diverged for his own pleasure from the beaten path. Like most extraordinary boys, he was consumed with curiosity to penetrate the secrets of nature ; he tried to teach himself chemistry and other physical sciences, and attained so far as to destroy an old willow with a burning glass. He was aided in these pursuits, and generally comforted and encouraged, by Dr. Lind, a good physician who appears as a beneficent sage in more than one of his writings. The account of this excellent person in Hogg's biography is a mere caricature ; but he had been in the East, and there was not a little of the magus in him. One very important effect of these studies was to induce Shelley to read Pliny's *Natural History*, where he found not only natural history but natural theology, and which exerted no small influence in moulding his opinions. He had *Thalaba* and *Kehana* by heart, and his own literary attempts at this period attested his love of the wild and wonderful. They consisted of two novels in taste of the Redcliffe school, *Zastrozzi* and *St. Irvyne*, which actually found publishers. *The Wandering Jew*, a romantic poem published after his death, in which his distant cousin and Sion House schoolfellow, Thomas Medwin, claims a dubious share and *Original Poems by Victor and Cazire*, in which he certainly had an unnamed collaborator, whose detected plagiarisms led him to suppress the book, of which no copy is now known to exist. The others indicate an imaginative temperament, and that is all that can be said for them.

Shelley was matriculated at Oxford in the autumn of 1810, but his residence was not destined to be of long duration. Soon after his arrival he made the acquaintance of his future biographer, Thomas

Jefferson Hogg, who has given us a most graphic picture of his appearance and demeanour at this period. With all Hogg's propensity to caricature, the fidelity of this section of his biography may be admitted, for it has the warrant of Trelawny. It is a wonderful picture of the high-souled youthful enthusiast, eager to teach what he has not learned, and wearing the outer vesture of intolerable conceit and eccentricity. The two young men soon became notorious; and when after perpetrating a practical joke by the publication of a volume of nonsensical verse attributed to Margaret Nicholson, a lunatic who more than twenty years before had attempted to kill the king, they circulated a syllabus on the "Necessity of Atheism" among the heads of houses and the episcopal bench, it is small wonder that they promptly incurred expulsion (March 1811). If, nevertheless, Hogg's account of the transaction is correct, and it is corroborated by independent testimony, the authorities seem to have acted with fully as much precipitation as the culprits. In the main the transaction was favourable to Shelley's intellectual growth, but it was attended by two great disadvantages; it induced from a point of honour the future translator of Spinoza to continue to style himself an atheist long after he had ceased to be one, if he ever was one at all; and it led indirectly to his contracting the imprudent marriage which brought grief and remorse upon himself and destruction upon another. Within six months after his expulsion from Oxford and consequent estrangement from his family had left him his own master he had fallen a victim to the attractions of Harriet Westbrook, a girl three years younger than himself, and had eloped with her to Gretna Green. His account of the transaction in a contemporary letter to Miss Hitchener is perfectly natural and credible; he became engaged in a correspondence with Harriet, who fancied herself ill treated at school, and found that he had gone too far. She threatened suicide, threw herself upon his protection, and at length, from generous motives, but weakly and wrongly, he consented to marry one whom he had hardly seen. Permanent happiness could not well be expected from such a union, yet for a considerable time things went well. Harriet was attractive in person, pleasant in manner, amiable in disposition, and engaging from what seemed the immaturity of a promising character. Unfortunately she was as mature at sixteen as she was ever to be. She had, properly speaking, no character, but was entirely moulded by circumstances. Shelley was by no means exacting; there is no trace of any complaint or impatience on his part during the two years through which Harriet consented to be guided by him. When she fell under other influences the marriage became a mockery, and its issue a dismal tragedy.

The limits and purposes of this sketch prevent any very detailed notice of those among the innumerable adventures of Shelley which have no immediate concern with his writings. He and his young bride lived successively at Edinburgh, York, and Keswick. He was probably attracted to the latter place by a desire to make the acquaintance of Southey, who received him kindly, and told a correspondent that he was the image of what he had once been himself. The picture

of the youthful Southey in the memoirs of Thomas Poole proves that this judgment was not remote from the truth. If Shelley's account to Miss Hitchener may be trusted, Southey's opinions were even then much more liberal than would have been approved by the *Quarterly Review*. From the Lakes (February 1812), Shelley proceeded to Ireland on the Quixotic errand of redressing the wrongs of that country, real enough in those days. He soon discovered that there was little in common between him and the Roman Catholic leaders, and his experience of their intolerance probably contributed to produce the moderation and practical spirit which surprise us in his later utterances on politics. Returning to Great Britain in April, he lived successively at Nant Gwillt in Radnorshire, at Lynton, where he got into trouble for circulating what the Government deemed incendiary addresses, and at Tanyrallt, a cottage near Tremadoc in North Wales, where he was forward in raising money to save the embankment by which so much land has been reclaimed from the sea. His residence there was brought to a close by a mysterious incident, which he represented as the nocturnal attack of an assassin, but which was most probably one of the hallucinations to which the continual tension of his nerves rendered him liable. He fled to Ireland, but soon repaired to London, where *Queen Mab*, his first considerable work, chiefly written in 1812, was privately printed.

This eloquent but immature production has perhaps attained a wider celebrity than any of his works, simply because it is almost the only one which does not chiefly appeal to readers of poetical temperament. It has scarcely a trace of the peculiar characteristics of his genius ; and stands in fact very much in the same relation to the real Shelley as Coleridge's " Religious Musings " do to the real Coleridge. Neither of these great poets had yet learned to sing ; their speech is impressive, but it is not the speech of poetry. Although, however, Shelley has not yet mastered the secret of the harmonious modulation of blank verse, or the art of investing every phrase with poetical glamour, his eloquence sometimes brings him very near the confines of high poetry, especially in the description of the calm of Nature which precedes the horrors of the battlefield. Crude as the thought of the poem is, there are aspects in which it appears highly impressive. " Seldom," remarks Professor Dowden, " before in English poetry had the unity of nature and the universality of law—the idea of a cosmos—been expressed with more precision or a more ardent conviction. Seldom before in poetry had the vast and ceaseless flow of Being—restless yet subject to a constant flow of evolution and development—been so vividly conceived."

Shelley's residence in London in 1813 was marked by the birth of his daughter Ianthe, in June, and by several new intimacies, chiefly among the circle of vegetarians to which he had attached himself, but also including Godwin, with whom he had previously corresponded and Thomas Love Peacock, afterwards his intimate companion and executor. In the autumn he made a hasty expedition to Scotland and the Lakes, not clearly accounted for ; and soon after his return commenced the estrangement from his wife which was attended with

such lamentable consequences. Shelley's conduct must inevitably be condemned by all who dissent from that theory of marriage which he shared with Milton, which makes its validity to consist in the existence of mutual affection<sup>1</sup> and it must be admitted that such dissent is inevitable when, as must be the case with all but adventurous thinkers, theories are regarded not with reference to their abstract reasonableness, but to their operation upon the framework of society. The institution, nevertheless, like other institutions, owes much to those who insist upon a higher standard than is found possible in general practice. Such idealists may at least claim not to be misrepresented, and although the matter has been set in the clearest light in Professor Dowden's biography, the current misrepresentations of Shelley are very grave. It is generally assumed that his estrangement from Harriet was the consequence of the attachment he had formed for Mary Godwin, the truth being exactly the reverse. Up to September 1813, he was undoubtedly attached to Harriet. In March 1814, he writes a most pathetic and mournful letter to Hogg,<sup>1</sup> from which it appears that he has been a month absent from his home, and dreads to return to it. The cause was no doubt the great change in Harriet's tastes, pursuits, and deportment remarked by Hogg at this period. But what was the cause of the change? There is no reason for suspecting Harriet of conjugal infidelity; and although Shelley afterwards mentions, without saying that he credits, an allegation to this effect, at a still later date, when speaking of the subject to Henry Roweley, he ascribes the breach entirely to the alienation of Harriet from him, produced, as he persuades himself, by the machinations (if he had said the unintentional influence he might not have erred) of her sister Eliza. Another probable cause might be suggested, but it is better to imitate Shelley's delicacy.<sup>2</sup> The essential points to remember are that when Shelley wrote the letter to Hogg depicting the ruin of his domestic happiness he had not so much as seen Mary Godwin except as a girl, she being then in Scotland, where she had been living for nearly two years; that he still strove for a reconciliation, addressing to Harriet as late as May an affecting appeal which ought not to have failed of its effect;<sup>3</sup> finally that, some time in June, for what ostensible reason is unknown, but surely under some sinister influence, she left their home at Bracknell and took up her abode at Bath. At last she became alarmed, but it was too late. Mary Godwin had returned to a frigid father and an oppressive step-mother at the end of March. Shelley had met her in May, and mutual sympathies and kindred griefs had woven their hearts too closely. They left England together on July 28, accompanied, to their misfortune, by Claire Clairmont, the daughter of Mary's stepmother.

<sup>1</sup> Hogg, vol. ii., pp. 513-516.

<sup>2</sup> Having written in the dedication to *The Revolt of Islam*,

    The other's heart was like a heart of stone,  
he altered the line into

    Hard hearts and cold, like weights of icy stone,  
lest the thought in his mind should be suspected by the public.

<sup>3</sup> Dowden, vol. i., pp. 413, 414.



Interviews between Shelley and Harriet had preceded this step, and the remarkable letter which he addressed to her from the Continent shows that she was cognisant of his actions, and was expected to correspond with him regularly; yet her submission cannot be said to have amounted to consent,<sup>1</sup> though she must have been ready to execute the deeds and settlement which Shelley, before his departure, had directed to be prepared for her benefit.

It is not likely that, even upon his own principles, the youth of twenty-one did all that he ought to have done at this trying crisis. He defended himself with spirit and dignity in a painful correspondence with Southey; but in a letter written in after years he confesses himself "a prey to the reproaches of memory," which can hardly have referred to any other transaction in his life. Perhaps the best commentary upon it will be found in his own words, doubtless written when it was acutely present to his recollection. "All of us who are worth anything spend our manhood in unlearning the follies or expiating the mistakes of our youth. We are stuffed full of prejudices; and our natural passions are so managed that if we restrain them we grow intolerant and precise, because we restrain them not according to reason but according to error; and if we do not restrain them we do all sorts of mischief to ourselves and others."<sup>2</sup> It was Shelley's peculiar misfortune that the very cause which in a measure justified his conduct was also the cause of the special obloquy with which he has been visited. If Harriet had been all that she ought to have been he would have been without excuse; but the world would have heard and thought little of the matter. But the very lack of worth in her which unsuited her for his companionship brought about a tragedy so piteous that every other sentiment is swallowed up in compassion.

There was no thought of tragedy in Shelley's mind as with his chosen associate he entered upon the most adventurous of his many adventurous expeditions. Mary Shelley, as she was henceforth always called, was a conspicuous example of the law of heredity which has moulded us all to what we are. She was the daughter of a philosopher of icy coldness and of a mother inspired by the most glowing enthusiasm. Snow lay all around her fire, and sometimes seemed to quench it. Her character was as yet unformed, and suffered from many angularities, some innate, others the result of circumstances. At heart she was as passionate, as sensitive, as dependent upon affection as Shelley himself. She needed, and received in abundant measure, the discipline of life which, ere she departed in middle age, had ren-

<sup>1</sup> It is remarkable that about this very time another great poet, "who in another's woe now wept his own," should have been unconsciously vindicating Shelley, of whom he probably had not heard. "In the name of God," wrote Coleridge on October 30, 1814, "what have we to do with Lord Nelson's mistresses or domestic quarrels? Sir A. Ball, himself exemplary in this respect, told me of his own personal knowledge Lady Nelson was enough to drive any man wild. She had no sympathy with his acute sensibilities, and his alienation was effected, though not shown, before he knew Lady Hamilton, by being heart starved."—*Letters*, p. 637.

<sup>2</sup> Is there no lot but this alone?

Madman or slave, must man be one?—*Matthew Arnold*.

dered her a truly noble woman. Her talents were such as became her ancestry, and would have led her to much more conspicuous achievements but for the annihilating catastrophe which crushed her powers and blighted her fortunes in early life. "Genial, gentle, sympathetic," says Robert Dale Owen,<sup>1</sup> writing of her as she appeared to him in 1827, "thoughtful and matured in opinion beyond her years; womanly, in the best sense, in every sentiment and instinct; she impressed me also as a person with warm social feelings, dependent for happiness on loving encouragement; needing a guiding and sustaining hand."

Jane, or as she chose to be called, Claire Clairmont, Mary's step-sister, and eight months younger, was handsome, spirited, and not devoid of interesting and attractive qualities; but her ambition, vanity, and pining discontent were a sore burden to those who had so imprudently adopted her, and involved them in some of the most disagreeable circumstances of their lives. Shelley's sympathy, nevertheless, was unfailing, and he was always ready to stand between her and misfortune.

Shelley and his companions crossed to France in a smack on July 28, 1814, and after a short stay in Paris, proceeded on foot, a mule carrying their slender baggage, on their romantic journey towards Switzerland. On the road Shelley wrote a remarkable letter to Harriet, sufficiently indicative of kindly feeling towards her, though the proposal that she should join them in Switzerland was manifestly impracticable. In fact their own projected residence in Switzerland was equally so: they seem to have depended on remittances which failed to arrive, and were only just able to effect their return to England by the cheap water-carriage of the Rhine. A description of the tour, from notes taken at the time, partly from Shelley's pen and partly from Mary's, was published anonymously in 1817, combined with letters from both on their second visit in 1816, and has lately been republished by Mr. C. I. Elton, whose own comments and illustrations give it great additional value.

The four or five months immediately following Shelley's return to England were, as regarded external circumstances, the most uncomfortable of his life. His allowance had naturally been withdrawn, and he existed precariously between leeches and vampires. "Do you think," he asked Peacock, "that Wordsworth could have written such poetry if he had ever had dealings with money-lenders?" and in fact this period is entirely unproductive. At the beginning of 1815, however, the death of his grandfather, Sir Bysshe, brought relief by making it the interest of his father to come to terms with him. A handsome annuity was granted in return for concessions on his part, and he might have been easy in his circumstances but for his imprudent though very noble generosity to Leigh Hunt, and others, and the perpetual blister of the inextricable affairs of Godwin, with whom he had become so nearly connected that he could not well avoid concerning himself on his behalf, though the quagmire of Godwin's embarrassments could not have been ameliorated to any extent

<sup>1</sup> *Threading My Way*, p. 289.

worth naming by the sacrifice of a score of Shelleys. Godwin's part in the business was pitiable: affecting great indignation with Shelley, he refused to receive anything from him openly, but had no objection to be relieved by clandestine and roundabout methods. Shelley's conduct does him high honour. Patient, considerate, generous up to and beyond the verge of imprudence, he went much further than he should have done, but happily retreated in time to save himself from ruin. After a tour in Devonshire, he settled at Bishopgate, near Windsor Forest. Here he was attacked by what seemed consumption, but the symptoms disappeared. The expectation of death, and the shadowy solemnity of the woodland scenery, conspired to produce *Alastor; or, the Spirit of Solitude*, the first poem which reveals the true Shelley. The rhetoric of *Queen Mab* is replaced by true lyric feeling welling from the depths of the soul; and instead of merely passable metre we have the varied music of an exquisitely modulated blank verse, unexcelled since Milton save by the highest metrical achievements of Coleridge and Tennyson, the latter of whom is sometimes too obviously the artist. Everything in *Alastor* seems dictated by an inner spirit: the poet's own aspiration is fully satisfied:—

Serenely now  
And moveless as a long-forgotten lyre  
Suspended in the solitary dome  
Of some mysterious and deserted fane,  
I wait thy breath, Great Parent; that my strain  
May modulate with murmurs of the air,  
And motions of the forest and the sea,  
And voice of living beings, and woven hymns  
Of night and day, and the deep heart of man.

Another circumstance which had the most fortunate influence on Shelley's development was the course of Greek study into which he at this time entered with his friends Hogg and Peacock, both of whom were excellent classical scholars, though neither was capable of recognizing the rebirth of the Hellenic spirit in a Shelley, a Keats, or a Landor. Shelley not merely read, but assimilated the classical writers, whom he had previously been inclined to disregard as, with the exception of the philosophers, superseded and superfluous. His ideals of taste underwent a gradual transformation, and he learned to unite grace, symmetry, and lucidity with the surpassing imagination which he had received from nature.

The peaceful life at Bishopgate lasted till May, when Shelley and Mary, with their infant son and Claire Clairmont, suddenly sought refuge in Switzerland. Various motives contributed to this step, but the chief was, no doubt, eagerness to escape from the insufferable torment of Godwin's pecuniary embarrassments. At Geneva they made the acquaintance of Byron, lately arrived on his voluntary exile, whom Shelley had never seen, but of whom a member of his family had seen a great deal too much. It soon transpired that Claire, when seeking an engagement at Drury Lane in the winter, had introduced herself to Byron, and become intimate with him. No one who knows Claire will doubt that Byron was as virtually innocent as in his very similar *liaison* with Lady Caroline Lamb, but naturally,

the less he cared for Claire the less delighted he felt at finding himself followed by her. It is known how Daphne eluded the pursuit of Apollo, but when the case was reversed the deity had no other remedy than to quarrel furiously with the nymph ; and the birth of a daughter early in 1817, which might have tended to reconcile more amenable people, served but to envenom the estrangement. It was a serious addition to the burdens which already so nearly overwhelmed Shelley, but his deportment under it was one of the finest passages of his life. To Claire he appears throughout as the affectionate brother, to Byron as the gentle but spirited monitor, to both as the chivalrous and high-minded gentleman. For a time no clouds arose between him and Byron ; they made numerous excursions together on the Lake of Geneva, and Byron's poetry from this time forth takes an evident colour from Shelley's more original mind. Mary Shelley's unique romance of *Frankenstein* was also commenced at Geneva, and, though entirely her own in invention and composition, undoubtedly owes much to the intellectual stimulus of Shelley's companionship. The party went to Chamouni and gazed on Mont Blanc, whose desolation, more impressive then than now, is magnificently described in Shelley's letters, and in the lines he wrote on the spot. These, in comparison with the corresponding performance of Coleridge, who never saw Mont Blanc, aid us to measure the gulf between first-hand and second-hand inspiration.

The travellers returned to England in August. It would have seemed best for them to have continued their journey into Italy, but they must in any case have been recalled by a dismal tragedy—the death of Harriet Shelley, who, having for unknown reasons quitted her father's house about the beginning of 1815, and having continued to fall lower and lower, drowned herself in the Serpentine in November 1816. Any failure of duty or considerateness on Shelley's part towards her, if such there were, was indeed terribly punished. We are justly held responsible for the unforeseen as well as the calculated consequences of our actions. It was his peculiar infelicity that the very circumstances which up to that time had seemed to justify his conduct now increased his condemnation, which they ought in all reason to have mitigated, in the eyes of the world. Had Harriet been a woman capable of discharging her duties in life, the world would have concerned itself but little about her ; but bitter reproach, including self-reproach, was now drawn upon Shelley by the very circumstances which proved that, from one point of view at least, he had not judged amiss. He became a mark for general obloquy, and his sensitive spirit made him deem himself more of an outcast than he actually was. The immediate result was his legal union with Mary, the next the loss of his children by Harriet—Ianthe and a boy born after the separation—whom he had left for the time in the hands of her family, and now endeavoured to reclaim. This the Westbrooks successfully resisted. Shelley's feelings found vent in most eloquent invectives against the Court of Chancery, but it must be admitted that, from the point of view of the apparent advantage of the children, which that tribunal was bound to consider, the decision was a very difficult one. The

children certainly do not seem to have profited in health or happiness by the steps which the Court conscientiously ordered for their benefit. The boy died young, but Ianthe grew up and contracted an advantageous marriage in Somersetshire, where her descendants occupy a high social position.

It is wonderful that during this trying time Shelley should have been able to produce within six months the longest of his poems, and that into which he put the most of himself, "the agony and bloody sweat of intellectual travail," he said. *The Revolt of Islam* was written at Great Marlow, where he lived now, partly on a high seat in Bisham Wood overlooking the river,

Where the woods to frame a bower  
With interlacéd branches mix and meet,

partly in a boat on the river

Where, with sound like many voices sweet,  
Waterfalls leap among wild islands green.

It was originally called *Laon and Cythna*, but, after undergoing some highly judicious alterations, was published at the beginning of 1818 under its present title.

*The Revolt of Islam* is less regarded than any of the longer poems of Shelley; it is difficult to say why, unless because the story and characters, being purely ideal, make more demand upon the imagination than the consecrated subject of *Prometheus Unbound*. It is an idealized version of the French Revolution and the convulsions resulting from it, which does not, and indeed could not, offend by extravagance, for hyperbole is impossible in dealing with so tremendous an event. The story is indeed exceedingly romantic, but not more so than that of its prototype, *The Faërie Queene*, which alone of English poems rivals it in the music of its stanza, while Shelley's poem has the advantage in sublimity, and in the simplicity and consistency of its allegory. The hero and heroine, though not strongly individualized, possess abundant human interest, and on the whole it seems impossible to find any serious fault with it except that the middle part needs compression, and, although full of beauties, appears weak in comparison with the magnificent introduction and the description of Laon's education in the first part of the poem, or the terrific pictures of war, famine, and pestilence in the latter portion. Nothing in contemporary poetry, outside Shelley himself, surpasses the splendour of these and many other passages; and others, such as the description of the bridal of Laon and Cythna, and of the latter's girlhood, are equally remarkable for tenderness. Perhaps the best brief criticism is that written by Professor Wilson under the influence of De Quincey, "To understand the greatness of the poet, and the littleness of his traducers, nothing more would be necessary than to recite to his delighted sense any six successive stanzas of that poem, so full of music, imagination, intellect, and passion." Its closest analogy is perhaps with Lucan's *Pharsalia*, of which Shelley was a great admirer, but by transporting his action to an ideal region he has escaped

the servile dependence upon history which so frequently renders Lucan tedious.

Shelley's residence at Marlow was especially marked by his charities to the cottagers, and his munificent and, indeed, unjustifiable generosity to Leigh Hunt, with whom he had become intimate on his return from Switzerland, and who certainly proved himself a grateful and affectionate friend. In March 1818 Shelley and Mary again left England, and this time, in the case of the former, for ever. Many causes co-operated, but the chief was probably the incessant demands upon them from the condition of Godwin's affairs. It was also necessary (at least the mother thought so, Shelley did not) to place the little Allegra in the hands of Byron, who had acknowledged her and undertaken to provide for her. Italy was accordingly the chosen refuge of the exiles, and the change was in the highest degree favourable to Shelley's genius; climate, scenery, and art conspiring to bestow that serenity in which he had hitherto been deficient. The impetuous eloquence of *The Revolt of Islam* had involved a mighty wrestle with the difficulties of poetical expression in the English language. Of all metrical forms the Spenserian stanza is probably the most arduous ("you must," says Shelley himself, "succeed or fail,") and the writer who had produced twelve cantos of such stanzas as Shelley's might claim to have mastered every difficulty, and to be, like the Duke of Wellington's soldiers, "able to go anywhere and do anything." The turbid precipitate of political passion, moreover, which may be seen lying darkly at the bottom of those glowing stanzas, had been fairly eliminated by the effort of their composition, and now, with a bosom unladen of animosities, though not of cares, with the investing influences of "an ampler æther, a diviner air," and figures of consecrated attributes and mythologic grandeur as *dramatis personæ*, Shelley could not fail to produce in his next considerable effort, the *Prometheus Unbound*, something higher and grander than *The Revolt of Islam*, even though, as we think, asserting no superiority merely as poetry. The first act of the *Prometheus*, chiefly composed in the autumn of 1818 at Byron's villa at Este, reveals strong influences from Shelley's recollections of the scenery of Switzerland. It is the most sublime of the four; the second and third, written at Rome in the following year among the flowery thickets which then tapestried the ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, breathe a tenderer mood, and are remarkable for beauty of description and a lyrical enthusiasm unattained in English poetry before the days of Shelley. The fourth act, added at the end of the year, is an afterthought, contributing nothing to the action of the drama, and although containing some of Shelley's finest writing, suffering occasionally from the attempt to express the inexpressible, and more open to the charge of unintelligible mysticism than any other of his works. In marvellous contrast to the radiant sublimity of the *Prometheus* is the stern sublimity of the *Cenci*, the tragedy which he turned to write immediately after completing, as he then thought, the *Prometheus* in 1819. The subject is too horrible for the stage, and, under any ordinary circumstances, ought to have been considered as too horrible for treatment in any form. But, in

truth, Shelley had no option. The *Cenci* stands alone among English tragedies as not only by far the finest produced since Shakespeare, but as an example of a tragedy owing its existence to an inspiration akin to that which gives birth to lyrical poetry. Shelley's imagination was fired and overmastered by Guido's famous portrait of Beatrice Cenci and his accidental acquisition of her MS. history, and his tragedy was dictated by the same irresistible influence as that which prompts a genuine lyric. It is the more astonishing that the diction of his piece should be so sober, its conduct so regular, its characters so nicely and accurately discriminated. Professor Spencer Baynes has shown that all the characters except the two principal are modifications of the same essential stuff, of fear, but that the timidity of any one bears no resemblance to the timidity of any of the rest. The characters of Cenci and Beatrice stand out in vivid contrast, and, notwithstanding the horror of the story and the tragic fate which overtakes innocence no less than villainy, the requisite of poetical justice is abundantly satisfied. The same lyrical impulse which led Shelley to undertake the subject guided him as by an infallible hand through all its difficulties, and enabled him to achieve what might have appeared impossible to one of his mental constitution. It is customary to regret that he did not perform more work in this manner; but, in fact, without such another exceptional inspiration, such another performance lay beyond his power. It also, as had happened to Goethe in similar cases, served to rid him of certain morbid tendencies hitherto observable in his writings, which do not recur.

We have somewhat anticipated the events of Shelley's life. After spending the spring of 1818 at Como and Milan, and the summer at the Baths of Lucca, he proceeded in the autumn to Venice to restore Allegra to her father, and there lost his little girl Clara, who died of a disorder induced by the climate. Byron lent him the villa of I Cappuccini at Este, where he wrote the first act of *Prometheus* and the *Lines among the Euganean Hills*, a magnificent panoramic description moulded and interpenetrated by feeling. The eclogue of *Rosalind and Helen*, commenced at Marlow, was completed here, a slight rambling piece, but containing many beautiful passages. His visits to Byron at Venice produced *Julian and Maddalo*, a conversation piece composed in a familiar style, famous for the description of Byron in the person of Maddalo, and still more so for its picture of a Venetian sunset. Great part of the poem is occupied by the account of a visit to a maniac, beautiful wherever intelligible, but so full of reticences and incoherences that its purport, if it has any, is hopelessly obscure.

In November Shelley set out for Rome. His journey exhibits him in a character in which he had already done some memorable things, but things which he was now greatly to surpass, that of a letter writer. The descriptive letters he now addressed to Peacock, and which he continued until his spirits failed upon the death of his boy William, in the following summer, are not only among the finest in our language as mere pieces of description, but manifest even in things indifferent a transparency of diction and an elevation of mind which bestow interest upon the most ordinary phrases. The same quality character-

izes his correspondence to the last, long after he has ceased to address himself designedly to the composition of elaborate letters. Scott's letters are perhaps equally interesting, but they move on a lower plane of thought and feeling. Byron's are equally full of character, but the character is not always amiable. Keats is intensely interesting, but egotistic in comparison. Southey in his correspondence is the consummate man of letters; Shelley alone is invariably the poet, and this without strain or pretension, for though his diction is lofty, his style is a model of lucid and simple elegance.

Passing through Ferrara, Bologna, Spoleto, and other places of interest, Shelley reached Rome in November. A visit to Naples in December produced splendid epistolary descriptions of Pompeii, Vesuvius, and Paestum; and an access of melancholy during his residence inspired those *Lines written in Dejection*, which are the first decisive exhibition of his lyrical genius in the sphere absolutely peculiar to it, the expression of the intensest feeling in the simplest language, with a thrilling energy and piercing subtlety which discriminate it from Burns, who probably comes nearest to Shelley in the elemental spontaneity of his song. This spontaneity, nevertheless, while fully predicable of the original impulse, in no respect excluded the most assiduous workmanship, which the state of Shelley's original MSS. proves him to have carried further than almost any other poet whose original drafts are accessible to us.

The early part of Shelley's second residence at Rome passed happily in the contemplation of the works of antiquity and the composition of *Prometheus Unbound*, but early in June he was visited by one of the saddest calamities of his life, the unexpected death of his little boy William. The effect on Mary was more crushing than upon him: although partially "retrieved from her melancholy depression" by the birth of another son, the late Sir Percy Florence Shelley, in November of the same year, and capable, as she proved, of heroic fortitude throughout the painful struggles that lay before her, she was never again the Mary who had written *Frankenstein*. Yet, though her subsequent productions failed to impress themselves permanently on the public mind, the faint perfume of autobiography which clings to the more remarkable (*Valperga*, *The Last Man*, *Lodore*), renders them in some respects and in some moods more interesting than their unique predecessor.

The bereaved parents took up their abode at Leghorn, mainly to be near Mr. and Mrs. Gisborne, old friends of Godwin's who had lived for many years in Italy. Gisborne was a placid, well-read man, in whom Shelley occasionally found something to endure: Mrs. Gisborne, amiable and accomplished, was probably the most suitable companion Mary Shelley could have met at such a time. She influenced Shelley considerably by making him acquainted with Calderon: so potent was his faculty of assimilating what interested him that an acknowledged imitation of a passage in Calderon's *Purgatory of St. Patrick* occurs in the *Cenci*, completed early in August. With unthinking eagerness Shelley plunged into the scheme of the Gisbornes and the young engineer, Henry Reveley, a son of Mrs. Gisborne by a former



marriage, to construct a steamboat to ply between Genoa and Leghorn, an admirable project, but quite beyond the intelligence of the day or the resources of the promoters. It involved Shelley in financial troubles, which for a time embittered his relations with the Gisbornes, but after their departure for England so cleared away as to enable him to indite that masterpiece of familiar and yet high poetry, the *Letter to Maria Gisborne*, dated July 1, 1820. The intervening period had been spent alternately at Leghorn, Florence, and Pisa. The latter city had, as already mentioned, witnessed the conclusion of *Prometheus Unbound* at the end of 1819; and the *Ode to the West Wind*, perhaps the most magnificent of all Shelley's lyrics, had been composed near Florence in October of that year. 1820 was to see the composition of the two poems which perhaps are the most characteristic of the indescribable quality which makes Shelley Shelley. *The Sensitive Plant* was written early in the year in Lady Mountcashell's garden, a spot whose ordinary condition, it is hinted, was more accurately depicted in the third than in the other two parts of the poem. In August of the same year the congenial blaze of sunshine amid beautiful scenery brought *The Witch of Atlas* to perfection within three days. Superficially the two poems are much unlike, *The Sensitive Plant* being a model of simplicity, *The Witch of Atlas* a dazzling assemblage of gorgeous descriptions, but they express different aspects of the idealism which Shelley had come to embrace, and, one in pensive, the other in exalted fashion, are the most ethereal of his longer pieces. Of all his poems, *The Witch of Atlas* perhaps most distinctly evidences his affinity to Turner, the supreme painter of clouds and showers and rainbows. The following stanza resembles a picture by Turner as closely as it is possible for words to resemble painting:—

But her choice sport was, in the hours of sleep,  
To glide adown old Nilus, where he threads  
Egypt and Ethiopia, from the steep  
Of utmost Axumé, until he spreads  
Like a calm flock of silver-fleeced sheep  
His waters on the plain, and crested heads  
Of cities and proud temples gleam amid,  
And many a vapour-belted pyramid.

Note the sublimity of the epithet *vapour belted*, which raises the stupendous structure above the clouds, and of the *gleam* and *many* which, by filling the landscape with superb architecture, expand its dimensions to the practically illimitable. When Turner himself came to deal with the landscape of Egypt in his illustrations to Moore's *Epicurean*, he wrought in precisely the same spirit. As might be expected, Shelley's *Cloud*, also written in 1820, is equally Turnerian. It is a marvellous composition for the swing and rush of lyrical enthusiasm, united to the brilliant and yet nicely accurate delineation of some of the most indescribable phenomena in Nature: still it is hardly so general a favourite as its companion *The Skylark*, in which Shelley's muse is impregnated with as much felicity as Keats's in his *Nightingale*. The *Odes to Liberty* and *Naples*, though magnificent in parts, are less satisfactory; alone among Shelley's lyrics they convey the idea of his having done what he says no man can do, said to himself, "I

will compose poetry." The year was uncommonly fertile in lyrics to which no such reproach can be addressed, such as the *Hymns of Apollo and Pan*, *Spirit of Delight*, *The Question*, and *Love's Philosophy*. Mention must also be made of *Swellfoot the Tyrant*, an Aristophanic burlesque on the trial of Queen Caroline, a solitary but sufficient proof that Shelley was by no means destitute of humour.

Except for some painful altercations on pecuniary matters, 1820 was devoid of important incident until its last weeks, when Shelley made the acquaintance with the beautiful captive Emilia Viviani which in a certain measure inspired his *Epipsychidion*. The situation of a young, lovely, and highly accomplished woman, confined in a convent until she should yield her consent to an obnoxious marriage, was one to fire Shelley's imagination to the uttermost, and it is no wonder that she became the ideal of his muse for the time being. She was, however, rather the focus in which separate rays of inspiration concentrated themselves than the creator of this transcendent poem, the essential germ of which already existed in the verses first published in the *Relics of Shelley*, and there entitled "To his Genius." Of the date of this we can only say that it must be prior to Shelley's acquaintance with Emilia, to whom it makes no allusion, and subsequent to his perusal of the attack upon him in the *Quarterly*, which he first read in October 1819. The acquaintance with Emilia, substituting the concrete for the abstract, lent the vigour necessary for the ascent into that indescribably exalted and radiant region where the poem lives and moves and has its being, and which no other wing has traversed again. Mr. Swinburne has marvellously reproduced the metrical movement, but such intoxication—such perfectly pure and sane intoxication—with the choicest cup of Love has never since been granted to another. It admits of no comparison with the works of others, it stands as solitary as the *Vita Nuova*, and is as characteristic of Shelley as that is of Dante. "It is," he told Gisborne, "an idealized history of my life and feelings. I think one is always in love with something or other; the error—and I confess it is not easy for spirits cased in flesh and blood to avoid it—consists in seeking in a mortal image the likeness of what is, perhaps, eternal." The same cannot be said of another memorable poem of this year (1821) *Adonais: an Elegy on the Death of John Keats*, for here Shelley evidently had Moschus's *Elegy on Bion* before him, as well as *Lycidas*. In sonorous grandeur he has surpassed his models, but Moschus excels him in tenderness: and there are felicities in *Lycidas* as much beyond his sphere as *Epipsychidion* is beyond Milton's. Shelley has the advantage of a loftier theme than Milton, and a deeper personal interest than Milton probably felt in Edward King, yet his handling is somewhat conventional, and it is not until he has got fairly away from allegory and personification that he becomes truly himself, and, proceeding from strength to strength, at last launches out upon the most sublime sequence of stanzas he ever composed, those from "Go thou to Rome," to the end of the poem. He deemed it "the least imperfect of my compositions," and expresses a mortification unusual with him at the cold response of his Boeotian public. "If *Adonais*," he asks

Leigh Hunt, "had no success, and excited no interest, what incentive can I have to write?" Shelley admired *Hyperion* enthusiastically, but strangely pronounced the other constituents of the divine volume "insignificant," an opinion which he probably revised, for in the last important letter that he ever wrote he says, "Keats was a great genius, let the classical party say what it will." The above hasty judgment is perhaps the only instance of injustice to a contemporary to be found in his writings; his admiration of Wordsworth and Byron went even beyond the limits of the strictly defensible. The value of his praise is shown by the *Defence of Poetry*, provoked into existence this year by Peacock's *Four Ages of Poetry*, where, besides a splendid apotheosis of the art, its chief professors in all ages are extolled with discriminating felicity. Shelley's criticism is not, like Coleridge's, startling in its penetration and originality; when he reverses the general verdict, as in preferring the *Paradise* to the other sections of the *Divine Comedy*, it is not so much from the application of a principle as from an innate refinement of taste. It is noteworthy that this, the most elaborate of Shelley's prose compositions, owes its existence to a fortuitous circumstance, but for which his views on his own special art would have remained comparatively obscure. It is impossible to tell how much else may have remained unuttered; but the essay abounds with evidence of mental growth in all directions. When Shelley wrote *Queen Mab*, for instance, he thought Christ an ambitious man, who aimed at the throne of Judæa: he now says "Jesus Christ divulged the sacred and eternal truths contained in these [Plato's] views to mankind, and Christianity, in its abstract purity, became the exoteric expression of the esoteric doctrines of the poetry and wisdom of antiquity."

The year 1821 was in general peaceful, disturbed only by the temporary revival of some old calumnies, and by Claire's constant disquiet about her daughter whom she had so unfortunately parted with contrary to Shelley's advice. This occasioned a visit from Shelley to Byron at Ravenna, resulting in nothing beyond some fine descriptive letters. Shortly afterwards, Byron, having become involved in difficulties with the Papal government, removed to Shelley's vicinity at Pisa, a step which considerably expanded the latter's narrow sphere of society. Friction with Byron was only averted by continual self-control on his part; but after his death Byron wrote, "You were all mistaken about Shelley, who was without exception the best and least selfish man I ever knew." He had already become intimate with the gentle and generous Edward Williams, a young officer retired from the Indian Army, and his wife Jane, in many respects a fascinating woman. In October the outbreak and initial successes of the Greek insurrection inspired Shelley with one of his most extraordinary performances, the *Hellas*, "a mere lyrical improvise," completed in a few days. Overpowering indeed must have been the enthusiasm which could thus produce such a torrent of song, and the lyrics of *Hellas* are as perfect in form as they are magnificent in expression. *Hellas* is an imitation of the *Persæ* of Æschylus, but it is such a *Persæ* as Æschylus would have written if his mind could have been enriched by the experi-

ence of two thousand years. Nothing is more noticeable than the spirit of pity and equity even towards the oppressor which pervades the whole, and is especially expressed in the concluding chorus. Shelley had at length fought his way to an intellectual serenity which he was not to have another opportunity of manifesting by his productions, for *Hellas* was fated to be his last important work. He further commenced a translation of the most imperturbable of authors, Spinoza, for which the volcanic Byron was to have written a preface.

The last months of Shelley's life were in the main happy, though pregnant, as he felt, with gathering storms. The most formidable prospect of any was the inopportune migration of Leigh Hunt and all his family to Italy, partly occasioned by a literary scheme of Byron's, but partly by Shelley's own unreflecting ardour. How anything short of death could have extricated him from the embarrassments it must have brought upon him passes conjecture. Another great trouble, Claire's incessant restlessness, was unexpectedly removed by the death of the cause of it, the little Allegra. Godwin's embarrassments at length reached their inevitable climax in bankruptcy, and all that Mary had earned by her new novel, *Valperga*, went into the gulf. Time meanwhile did not pass unhappily at Pisa. Shelley's interest in Mrs. Williams inspired some of the most beautiful of his minor lyrics; his attachment to her frank and chivalrous husband grew apace; and in a new friend, Edward Trelawny, he recognized the union of the man of genius with the man of action, not without some admixture of the charlatan. The luckless notion of a new liberal journal which was decoying Hunt to Italy had at least the good effect of leading Shelley to translate scenes from *Faust* and Calderon as the groundwork of intended papers, equalling if not surpassing the mastery which he had already displayed in his renderings of the *Hymn to Mercury* and the *Cyclop*. The standard of translation has risen since his day; in perfection of artistic workmanship he cannot compare with Rossetti and John Payne; but for the mutual transfusion of the minds of translator and author, like the interpenetrating spheres of flame described in *Epipsychidion*, there is still no other such example in our literature. He also gave some time to a tragedy on Charles the First, but the subject did not inspire him, and what remains of the attempt, though graceful and poetical, is chiefly remarkable as an example of the gentle and reconciling spirit which we have already remarked in *Hellas*.

Towards the end of April the Shelleys and Williamsses removed to the Casa Magni, near Lerici, on the Gulf of Spezzia, and here, for perhaps the first time in his life, Shelley was entirely happy in his environment. The open sea, a wild romantic shore, a swift boat, a simple uncivilized people, music, moonlight, Spanish dramas, made an Elysium for him. *Charles the First* was laid aside for a more congenial labour, *The Triumph of Life*, which displays the influence of Petrarch and Dante, and might have ranked among his best if the exceedingly rough draft, out of which the bulk of the poem was painfully elicited after his death, could have been wrought to the perfection of the introduction. It scarcely seems likely, but Shelley's revision of his writings

has not unfrequently worked greater wonders. Much of the poem was written as he reclined rocking in his boat by moonlight, and the strain of composition and the wild features of the spot began to affect his nerves. The last days of his residence at Lerici are full of tales of apparitions of folk living and dead, not seen by him alone, but also by the comparatively prosaic Jane Williams. The most striking, apparently founded on an incident in Calderon, is that of the veiled phantom that, unmasking itself before the poet, and disclosing his own features, asked, *How long do you mean to be content?* It was either just before or just after this encounter that Shelley, writing to Gisborne, declares himself to be so so long as he can banish thought either of the past or the future. "I stand, as it were, upon a precipice, which I have ascended with great and cannot descend without greater peril, and I am content if the heaven above me is calm for the passing moment."

The presentiment shadowed forth in these words was about to be fulfilled, though not in a manner that could have been foreseen. On June 19, the Hunts, who had essayed to leave England in the previous November, and had been contending with every kind of hindrance ever since, arrived at Genoa, and proceeded to Leghorn. On July 1, Shelley and Williams followed them thither in their boat, and the former accompanied them to Pisa. The ungracious reception they met with from Byron depressed him, but he was eventually so well satisfied with the success of his endeavours to establish them comfortably that, according to Lady Mountcashell, the last person he saw at Pisa, he departed for Leghorn in the highest spirits. On the afternoon of July 8, he embarked with Williams to return to Lerici in their little vessel. Trelawny was to have accompanied them in Byron's yacht; a trifling informality detained him in the harbour, and he watched the tiny skiff sail on in the teeth of the unlooked-for but now fast gathering storm. A sea-fog rose and veiled it from his sight. "It was intensely hot; the atmosphere was heavy and stirless to an oppressive degree, and a profound stillness spread far over the ocean. By half-past six it was almost dark; the sea looked solid and lead-coloured; an oily scum was on the surface; the wind was beginning to wake in short panting gusts; and big drops of rain struck the water, rebounding as they fell. A tremendous squall ensued, lasting about twenty minutes. When it had passed over, all the barks that had speckled the sea were seen sailing in in safety by watchers from the Leghorn lighthouse, except Shelley's, which was never again beheld until, some months afterwards, she was drawn up from the bottom of the deep. The three bodies—Shelley's, Williams's, and an English sailor boy's—came successively on shore, and were consumed in accordance with Italian quarantine regulations. Shelley's ashes, as all know, rest in the spot chosen for them by Trelawny, under the pyramid of Caius Cestius in the Protestant cemetery at Rome, the green slope of which he had himself written: "To see the sun shining on its bright grass, fresh with the autumnal dews, and hear the whispering of the leaves of the trees which have overgrown the tomb of Cestius, and the soil which is stirring in the sun-warm earth, and to

mark the tombs, mostly of women and young people who were buried there, one might, if one were to die, desire the sleep they seem to sleep." The unconscionable heart, *Cor Cordium* as the inscription declares it, was brought by Mary Shelley to England, and is in the keeping of her family. Something of the prophetess broke forth ever and anon in this remarkable woman, and it now proved that she had prefigured the catastrophe in an inspired passage at the end of her *Valperga*, then awaiting publication in England. After many cruel and bitter struggles, continually growing in dignity and nobleness of character, she closed her eyes at last in peace and opulence, February 1851, under the care of her son and daughter-in-law. Her son Percy Florence, the most amiable of mankind, and the inheritor of many of his father's tastes and accomplishments, succeeded to the baronetcy, and died in December 1889. The daughter-in-law has survived to erect the monument in University College, Oxford, which, placed there with the warm approval of the authorities whose predecessors expelled him, symbolizes his reconciliation with the public opinion which condemned him so unmercifully in his life. His own words might have been appropriately inscribed: "The jury which sits in judgment upon a poet must be composed of his peers; it must be empanelled by time from the selectest of the wise of many generations."

The death of Shelley, with other contemporary events of the same nature, serves to mark a dividing line in the history of English poetry. Keats, Shelley, Byron, the three poets from whom great things might still have been expected, died within four years. Wordsworth and Coleridge, their seniors by twenty years, were now practically spent forces, and although the same cannot be said of Scott and Landor, these henceforth almost entirely devoted themselves to prose. The great elemental poets, those who drew their inspiration from nature at first hand, had departed, and (with the remarkable exception of Robert Browning) their place was occupied by derivative schools, not destitute indeed of originality, and sometimes even surpassing their predecessors in purity of form and exquisiteness of finish, but still distinctly *diadochi*, the Ptolemies and Seleucuses who divide the empire of Alexander. Tennyson is the supreme artist of this period, and the very fact that he has expressed the spirit of the Victorian age with infinitely greater exactness than Wordsworth and Shelley have expressed the spirit of their own times, while rendering him invaluable for the historian, proves that he does not stand quite upon the level of his predecessors. "They were not for an age, but for all time."

English poetry has had a very honourable history since the death of Byron, and has enriched the language with many works destined to endure; yet the fountains of inspiration are more remote, and the stream flows with more tranquillity on a lower level. The outburst of a new creative period may be very near, or may be deferred for centuries. It will not originate in the study of Shelley or any other poet, but it will be influenced by all, and by none more so than by him who of all his contemporaries stood nearest to the elemental forces of nature and possessed the most prophetic insight into the future course of the world's affairs; who could impersonate abstract concep-

tions in divine figures, like a Greek of primitive times, and pursue the subtlest human emotions to the dizzy boundary of consciousness ; matchless alike in command of language and in command of music ; the very frailties of whose genius, not always of small account, may yet commonly be summed up in this, that he was even too much of a poet.

RICHARD GARNETT.

# THE 'POETICAL WORKS OF PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

TO HARRIET\*\*\*\*\*

<p>WHOSE is the love that, gleaming through the world, Wards off the poisonous arrow of its scorn ? Whose is the warm and partial praise, Virtue's most sweet reward ?</p> <p>Bepeath whose looks did my reviving soul Riper in truth and virtuous daring grow? Whose eyes have I gazed fondly on, And loved mankind the more ?</p>	<p>Harriet ! on thine :—thou wert my purer mind ; Thou wert the inspiration of my song ; Thine are these early wilding flowers, Though garlanded by me.</p> <p>Then press into thy breast this pledge of love, And know, though time may change and years may roll, Each flow'et gathered in my heart It consecrates to thine.</p>
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## QUEEN MAB

<p>How wonderful is Death, Death and his brother Sleep ! One, pale as yonder waning moon, With lips of lurid blue ; The other, rosy as the morn When throned on ocean's wave, It blushes o'er the world : Yet both so passing wonderful !</p> <p>Hath then the gloomy Power Whose reign is in the tainted sepul- chres Seized on her sinless soul Must then that peerless form Which love and admiration cannot view Without a beating heart, those azure veins [of snow, Which steal like streams along a field That lovely outline, which is fair As breathing marble, perish ? Must putrefaction's breath Leave nothing of this heavenly sight But loathsomeness and ruin ? Spare nothing but a gloomy theme,</p>	<p>On which the lightest heart might moralise ? Or is it only a sweet slumber Stealing o'er sensation, Which the breath of roseate morn- ing Chaseth into darkness ? Will Ianthe wake again, And give that faithful bosom joy Whose sleepless spirit waits to catch Light, life, and rapture, from her smile ?</p> <p>Yes ! she will wake again, Although her glowing limbs are mo- tionless, And silent those sweet lips, Once breathing eloquence That might have soothed a tiger's rage, Or thawed the cold heart of a con- queror. Her dewy eyes are closed, And on their lids, whose texture fine Scarce hides the dark blue orbs be- neath,</p>
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## QUEEN MAB

The baby Sleep is pillowed :  
Her golden tresses shade  
The bosom's stainless pride,  
Curling like tendrils of the parasite

Around a marble column.

Hark ! whence that rushing  
sound ?

'Tis like the wondrous strain  
That round a lonely ruin swells,  
Which, wandering on the echoing shore,

The enthusiast hears at evening :

'Tis softer than the west wind's  
sigh ;

'Tis wilder than the unmeasured  
notes

Of that strange lyre whose strings  
The genii of the breezes sweep :

Those lines of rainbow light  
Are like the moonbeams when  
they fall

Through some cathedral window, but  
the tints

Are such as may not find  
Comparison on earth.

Behold the chariot of the Fairy  
Queen !

Celestial coursers paw the un-  
yielding air ;

Their filmy pennons at her word  
they furl,

And stop obedient to the reins of  
light :

These the Queen of Spells drew  
in,

She spread a charm around the  
spot,

And leaning graceful from the  
ethereal car,

Long did she gaze, and silently,  
Upon the slumbering maid.

Oh ! not the visioned poet in his  
dreams,

When silvery clouds float through the  
wildered brain,

When every sight of lovely, wild,  
and grand,

Astonishes, enraptures ele-  
vates—

When fancy at a glance com-  
bines

The wondrous and the beau-  
tiful,—

So bright, so fair, so wild a  
shape

Hath ever yet beheld,

As that which reined the coursers  
of the air,

And poured the magic of her gaze  
Upon the sleeping maid.

The broad and yellow moon  
Shone dimly through her  
form—

That form of faultless sym-  
metry ;

The pearly and pellucid car  
Moved not the moonlight's  
line ;

'Twas not an earthly page-  
ant ;

Those who had looked upon  
the sight,

Passing all human glory,  
Saw not the yellow moon,

Saw not the mortal scene,  
Heard not the night-wind's

rush,

Heard not an earthly sound,  
Saw but the fairy pageant,

Heard but the heavenly  
strains

That filled the lonely dwell-  
ing.

The Fairy's frame was slight ; yon  
fibrous cloud,

That catches but the palest tinge  
of even,

And which the straining eye can  
hardly seize

When melting into eastern twi-  
light's shadow,

Were scarce so thin, so slight ; but  
the fair star,

That gems the glittering coronet  
of morn,

Sheds not a light so mild, so  
powerful,

As that which, bursting from the  
Fairy's form,

Spread a purpureal halo round  
the scene,

Yet with an undulating  
motion,

Swayed to her outline grace-  
fully.

## QUEEN MAB

From her celestial car  
The Fairy Queen descend-  
ed,  
And thrice she waved her  
wand  
Circled with wreaths of  
amaranth :  
Her thin and misty form  
Moved with the moving  
air,  
And the clear silver tones,  
As thus she spoke, were  
such  
As are unheard by all but  
gifted ear.

*Fairy.* Stars ! your balmiest influ-  
ence shed !  
Elements ! your wrath sus-  
pend !  
Sleep, Ocean, in the rocky  
bounds  
That circle thy domain !  
Let not a breath be seen to stir  
Around yon grass-grown ruin's  
height,  
Let even the restless gossa-  
mer  
Sleep on the moveless air !  
Soul of Ianthe ! thou,  
Judged alone worthy of the en-  
vied boon  
That waits the good and the sincere ;  
that waits  
Those who have struggled, and with  
resolute will  
Vanquished earth's pride and mean-  
ness, burst the chains,  
The icy chains of custom, and have  
shone  
The day-stars of their age ;—Soul  
of Ianthe !  
Awake ! arise !

Sudden arose  
Ianthe's Soul ; it stood  
All beautiful in naked purity,  
The perfect semblance of its bodily  
frame.  
Instinct with inexpressible beauty  
and grace,  
Each stain of earthliness  
Had passed away, it reassumed  
Its native dignity, and stood  
Immortal amid ruin.

Upon the couch the body lay,  
Wrapt in the depth of slumber :  
Its features were fixed and meaning-  
less,  
Yet animal life was there,  
And every organ yet performed  
Its natural functions ; 'twas a  
sight  
Of wonder to behold the body and  
soul.  
The self-same lineaments, the  
same  
Marks of identity were there ;  
Yet, oh how different ! One aspires  
to heaven,  
Pants for its sempiternal heritage,  
And ever-changing, ever-rising still,  
Wantons in endless being.  
The other, for a time the unwilling  
sport  
Of circumstance and passion, struggles  
on ;  
Fleets through its sad duration rapidly ;  
Then like a useless and worn-out  
machine,  
Rots, perishes and passes.

*Fairy.* Spirit ! who hast dived so  
deep ;  
Spirit ! who hast soared so  
high ;  
Thou the fearless, thou the  
mild,  
Accept the boon thy worth  
hath earned,  
Ascend the car with me.

*Spirit.* Do I dream ? Is this new feel-  
ing  
But a visioned ghost of slum-  
ber ?  
If indeed I am a soul,  
A free, a disembodied soul,  
Speak again to me.

*Fairy.* I am the Fairy MAB : to me  
'tis given  
The wonders of the human world to  
keep.  
The secrets of the immeasurable past,  
In the unfailing consciences of men,  
Those stern, unflattering chroniclers,  
I find :  
The future, from the causes which  
arise  
In each event, I gather : not the sting

Which retributive memory implants  
 In the hard bosom of the selfish man;  
 Nor that ecstatic and exulting throb  
 Which virtue's votary feels when he  
     sums up  
 The thoughts and actions of a well-  
     spent day,  
 Are unforeseen, unregistered by me:  
 And it is yet permitted me, to rend  
 The veil of mortal frailty, that the  
     spirit,  
 Clothed in its changeless purity, may  
     know  
 How soonest to accomplish the great  
     end  
 For which it hath its being, and may  
     taste  
 That peace, which, in the end, all life  
     will share.  
 This is the meed of virtue; happy  
 Soul,  
 Ascend the car with me!

The chains of earth's immurement  
 Fell from Ianthe's spirit;  
 They shrank and brake like bandages  
     of straw  
 Beneath a wakened giant's strength.  
 She knew her glorious change,  
 And felt in apprehension uncon-  
     trolled  
 New raptures opening round:  
 Each day-dream of her mortal  
     life,  
 Each frenzied vision of the slum-  
     bers  
 That closed each well-spent day  
 Seemed now to meet reality.

The Fairy and the Soul pro-  
     ceeded;  
 The silver clouds departed;  
 And as the car of magic they as-  
     cended,  
 Again the speechless music  
     swelled,  
 Again the coursers of the air  
 Unfurled their azure pennons, and the  
     Queen,  
 Shaking the beamy reins,  
 Bade them pursue their way.  
 The magic car moved on.  
 The night was fair, and countless  
     stars  
 Studded heaven's dark blue  
     vault,—

Just o'er the eastern wave  
 Peeped the first faint smile of  
     morn:—

The magic car moved on—  
 From the celestial noofs  
 The atmosphere in flaming sparkles  
     flew,

And where the burning wheels  
 Eddied above the mountain's lofti-  
     est peak,

Was traced a line of lightning.  
 Now it flew far above a rock,  
 The utmost verge of earth,  
 The rival of the Andes, whose dark  
     brow

Lowered o'er the silver sea.

Far, far below the chariot's  
     path,

Calm as a slumbering babe,  
 Tremendous Ocean lay.

The mirror of its stillness  
 showed

The pale and waning stars,  
 The chariot's fiery track,  
 And the grey light of morn  
 Tinging those fleecy clouds  
 That canopied the dawn.

Seemed it, that the chariot's  
     way

Lay through the midst of an immense  
     concave,

Radiant with million constellations,  
     tinged

With shades of infinite col-  
     our,

And semicircled with a belt  
 Flashing incessant meteors.

The magic car moved on.  
 As they approached their  
     goal,

The coursers seemed to gather  
     speed;

The sea no longer was distinguished;  
     earth [sphere;

Appeared a vast and shadowy  
 The sun's unclouded orb

Rolled through the black con-  
     cave;

Its rays of rapid light

Parted around the chariot's swifter  
     course, [spray

And fell, like ocean's feathery  
 Dashed from the boiling  
     surge

Before a vessel's prow.

## QUEEN MAB

The magic car moved on.  
Earth's distant orb appeared  
The smallest light that twinkles in the  
heaven ;

• Whilst round the chariot's way  
Innumerable systems rolled,  
And countless spheres diffused  
An ever varying glory.

It was a sight of wonder : some  
Were horned like the crescent  
moon ;

Some shed a mild and silver beam  
Like Hesperus o'er the western  
sea ;

Some dashed athwart with trains  
of flame,

Like worlds to death and ruin  
driven ;

Some shone like suns, and as the char-  
iot passed,

Eclipsed all other light.

Spirit of Nature ! here !

In this interminable wilderness  
Of worlds, at whose immensity

Even soaring fancy staggers,  
Here is thy fitting temple.

Yet not the lightest leaf  
That quivers to the passing  
breeze

Is less instinct with thee :

Yet not the meanest worm

That lurks in graves and fattens on  
the dead

Less shares thy eternal breath.

Spirit of Nature ! thou !

Imperishable as this scene,

Here is thy fitting temple !

### II

If solitude hath ever led thy steps  
To the wild ocean's echoing shore,  
And thou hast lingered there,  
Until the sun's broad orb  
Seemed resting on the burnished  
wave,

Thou must have marked the lines  
Of purple gold, that motionless  
Hung o'er the sinking sphere :  
Thou must have marked the bil-  
lowy clouds

Edged with intolerable radiancy,  
Towering like rocks of jet  
Crowned with a diamond wreath.  
And yet there is a moment,  
When the sun's highest point

Peeps like a star o'er ocean's western  
edge,

When those far clouds of feathery  
gold,

Shaded with deepest purple, gleam  
Like islands on a dark blue sea ;

Then has thy fancy soared above the  
earth,

And furled its wearied wing  
Within the Fairy's fane.

Yet not the golden islands  
Gleaming in yon flood of light,  
Nor the feathery curtains

• Stretching o'er the sun's bright  
couch,

Nor the burnished ocean-waves,  
Paving that gorgeous dome,

So fair, so wonderful a sight

As Mab's ethereal palace could afford.

Yet likest evening's vault, that fairy  
Hall !

As Heaven, low resting on the wave, it  
spread

Its floors of flashing light,

Its vast and azure dome,

Its fertile golden islands

Floating on a silver sea ;

Whilst suns their mingling beamings  
darted

Through clouds of circumambient  
darkness,

And pearly battlements around

Looked o'er the immense of Heaven.

The magic car no longer moved.

The Fairy and the Spirit

Entered the Hall of Spells :

Those golden clouds

That rolled in glittering billows

Beneath the azure canopy,

With the ethereal footsteps trembled  
not :

The light and crimson mists,

Floating to strains of thrilling melody  
Through that unearthly dwelling.

Yielded to every movement of the will.  
Upon their passive swell the Spirit

leaned,

And, for the varied bliss that pressed  
around,

• Used not the glorious privilege  
Of virtue and of wisdom.

• Spirit ! the Fairy said,

And pointed to the gorgeous  
dome,

This is a wondrous sight  
And mocks all human grandeur ;

But, were it virtue's only meed, to dwell

In a celestial palace, all resigned  
To pleasurable impulses, immured  
Within the prison of itself, the will  
Of changeless nature would be unfulfilled.

Learn to make others happy. Spirit,  
come !

This is thine high reward :—the past  
shall rise ;

Thou shalt behold the present ; I will  
teach

The secrets of the future.

The Fairy and the Spirit  
Approached the overhanging battlement.—

Below lay stretched the universe !  
There, far as the remotest line

That bounds imagination's flight,  
Countless and unending orbs

In mazy motion intermingled,  
Yet still fulfilled immutably

Eternai Nature's law.

Above, below, around

The circling systems formed

A wilderness of harmony ;

Each with undeviating aim,

In eloquent silence, through the  
depths of space

Pursued its wondrous way.

There was a little light

That twinkled in the misty distance :

None but a spirit's eye

Might ken that rolling orb ;

None but a spirit's eye,

And in no other place

But that celestial dwelling, might behold

Each action of this earth's inhabitants.

But matter, space and time,

In those aerial mansions cease to act ;  
And all-prevailing wisdom, when it reaps

The harvest of its excellence, o'er-  
bounds

Those obstacles, of which an earthly  
soul

Fears to attempt the conquest.

The Fairy pointed to the earth.  
The Spirit's intellectual eye  
Its kindred beings recognised.  
The thronging thousands, to a passing  
view,

Seemed like an ant-hill's citizens.  
How wonderful ! that even  
The passions, prejudices, interests,  
That sway the meanest being, the  
weak touch

That moves the finest nerve,  
And in one human brain  
Causes the faintest thought, becomes  
a link

In the great chain of nature.

Behold, the Fairy cried,  
Palmyra's ruin'd palaces !—

Behold ! where grandeur  
frowned

Behold ! where pleasure smiled ;

What now remains ?—the memory  
Of senselessness and shame—

What is immortal there ?

Nothing—it stands to tell

A melancholy tale, to give

An awful warning : soon

Oblivion will steal silently

The remnant of its fame.

Monarchs and conquerors there

Proud o'er prostrate millions trod—

The earthquakes of the human  
race,—

Like them, forgotten when the ruin  
That marks their shock is past.

Beside the eternal Nile

The Pyramids have risen.

Nile shall pursue his changeless  
way ;

Those Pyramids shall fall ;

Yea ! not a stone shall stand to tell

The spot whereon they stood ;

Their very site shall be forgotten,

As is their builder's name !

Behold yon sterile spot ;

Where now the wandering Arab's  
tent

Flaps in the desert-blast.

There once old Salem's haughty  
fane,

Reared high to heaven its thousand  
golden domes,

And in the blushing face of day

Exposed its shameful glory.

## QUEEN MAB

Oh ! many a widow, many an orphan  
 cursed  
 The building of that fane ; and  
 many a father,  
 Worn out with toil and slavery, im-  
 plored  
 The poor man's God to sweep it from  
 the earth,  
 And spare his children the detested  
 task  
 Of piling stone on stone, and poison-  
 ing  
 The choicest days of life,  
 To soothe a dotard's vanity.  
 There an inhuman and uncultured  
 race  
 Howled hideous praises to their De-  
 mon-God ;  
 They rushed to war, tore from the  
 mother's womb  
 The unborn child,—old age and in-  
 fancy  
 Promiscuous perished ; their victori-  
 ous arms  
 Left not a soul to breathe. Oh ! they  
 were fiends :  
 But what was he who taught them  
 that the God  
 Of nature and benevolence had given  
 A special sanction to the trade of  
 blood ?  
 His name and theirs are fading, and  
 the tales  
 Of this barbarian nation, which im-  
 posture  
 Recites till terror credits, are pursu-  
 ing  
 Itself into forgetfulness.

Where Athens, Rome, and Sparta  
 stood,  
 There is a moral desert now  
 The mean and miserable huts,  
 The yet more wretched palaces,  
 Contrasted with those ancient fanes,  
 Now crumbling to oblivion ;  
 The long and lonely colonnades,  
 Through which the ghost of Free-  
 dom stalks,  
 Seem like a well-known tune,  
 Which in some dear scene we have  
 loved to hear,  
 Remembered now in sadness.  
 But, oh ! how much more  
 changed,  
 How gloomier is the contrast

Of human nature there !  
 Where Socrates expired, a tyrant's  
 slave,  
 A coward and a fool, spreads death  
 around—  
 Then, shuddering, meets his  
 own.  
 Where Cicero and Antoininus lived,  
 A cowed and hypocritical monk  
 Prays, curses, and deceives.

Spirit ! ten thousand years  
 Have scarcely passed away,  
 Since, in the waste where now the  
 savage drinks  
 His enemy's blood, and, aping Eu-  
 rope's sons,  
 Wakes the unholy song of war,  
 Arose a stately city,  
 Metropolis of the western continent :  
 There, now, the mossy column-  
 stone,  
 Indented by Time's unrelaxing grasp,  
 Which once appeared to brave  
 All, save its country's ruin ;  
 There the wide forest scene,  
 Rude in the uncultivated loveliness  
 Of gardens long run wild,  
 Seems, to the unwilling sojourner,  
 whose steps  
 Chance in that desert has delayed,  
 Thus to have stood since earth was  
 what it is.

Yet once it was the busiest haunt,  
 Whither, as to a common centre,  
 flocked,  
 Strangers, and ships, and merchan-  
 dise :  
 Once peace and freedom blest  
 The cultivated plain :  
 But wealth, that curse of man,  
 Blighted the bud of its prosperity :  
 Virtue and wisdom, truth and liberty,  
 Fled, to return not, until man shall  
 know  
 That they alone can give the bliss  
 Worthy a soul that claims  
 Its kindred with eternity.

There's not one atom of yon  
 earth  
 But once was living man ;  
 Nor the minutest drop of rain,  
 That hangeth in its thinnest  
 cloud,  
 But flowed in human veins :  
 And from the burning plains

Where Lybian monsters yell,  
From the most gloomy glens  
Of Greenland's sunless clime,  
To where the golden fields  
Of fertile England spread  
Their harvest to the day,  
Thou canst not find one spot  
Whereon no city stood.

How strange is human pride !  
I tell thee that those living things,  
To whom the fragile blade of grass,  
That springeth in the morn  
And perisheth ere noon,  
Is an unbounded world ;  
I tell thee that those viewless be-  
ings,

Whose mansion is the smallest par-  
ticle

Of the impassive atmosphere,  
Think, feel, and live like man ;  
That their affections and anti-  
pathies,

Like his, produce the laws  
Ruling their moral state ;  
And the minutest throb  
That through their frame dif-  
fuses  
The slightest, faintest mo-  
tion,  
Is fixed and indispensable  
As the majestic laws  
That rule yon rolling orbs.

The Fairy paused. The Spirit,  
In ecstasy of admiration, felt  
All knowledge of the past revived ;  
the events

Of old and wondrous times,  
Which dim tradition interruptedly  
Teaches the credulous vulgar, were  
unfolded

In just perspective to the view ;  
Yet dim from their infinitude.

The Spirit seemed to stand  
High on an isolated pinnacle ;  
The flood of ages combating below,  
The depth of the unbounded uni-  
verse

Above, and all around  
Nature's unchanging harmony.

### III

FAIRY ! the Spirit said,  
And on the Queen of Spells  
Fixed her ethereal eyes,

I thank thee. Thou hast given  
A boon which I will not resign, and  
taught

A lesson not to be unlearned. I know  
The past, and thence I will essay to  
glean

A warning for the future, so that man  
May profit by his errors, and derive  
Experience from his folly :

For, when the power of imparting joy  
Is equal to the will, the human soul  
Requires no other heaven.

*Mab.* Turn thee, surpassing Spirit !  
Much yet remains unscanned.  
Thou knowest how great it is  
man,

Thou knowest his imbecility :  
Yet learn thou what he is ;  
Yet learn the lofty destiny  
Which restless Time prepares  
For every living soul.

Behold a gorgeous palace, that, amid  
Yon populous city, rears its thousand  
towers

And seems itself a city. Gloomy  
troops

Of sentinels, in stern and silent ranks,  
Encompass it around : the dweller  
there

Cannot be free and happy ; hearest  
thou not

The curses of the fatherless, the groans  
Of those who have no friend ? He  
passes on :

The King, the wearer of a gilded chain  
That binds his soul to abjectness, the  
fool

Whom courtiers nickname monarch,  
whilst a slave

Even to the basest appetites—that  
man

Heeds not the shriek of penury ; he  
smiles

At the deep curses which the destitute  
Mutter in secret, and a sullen joy  
Pervades his bloodless heart when  
thousands groan

But for those morsels which his  
wantonness

Wastes in unjoyous revelry, to save  
All that they love from famine : when  
he hears

The tale of horror, to some ready-made  
face

Of hypocritical assent he turns,  
Smothering the glow of shame, that,  
spite of him,  
Flushes his bloated cheek.

Now to the meal  
Of silence, grandeur, and excess, he  
drags

His palled unwilling appetite. If gold,  
Gleaming around, and numerous vi-  
ands culled

From every clime, could force the  
loathing sense

To overcome satiety,—if wealth  
The spring it draws from poisons not,  
—or vice,

Unfeeling, stubborn vice, converteth  
not

Its food to deadliest venom; then  
that king

Is happy; and the peasant who ful-  
fils

His unforced task, when he returns at  
even,

And by the blazing faggot meets again  
Her welcome for whom all his toil is  
sped,

Tastes not a sweeter meal.

Behold him now  
Stretched on the gorgeous couch; his  
fevered brain

Reels dizzily awhile: but ah! too  
soon

The slumber of intemperance sub-  
sides,

And conscience, that undying serpent,  
calls

Her venomous brood to their noctur-  
nal task.

Listen! he speaks! oh! mark that  
frenzied eye—

Oh! mark that deadly visage.  
King.

No cessation!  
Oh! must this last for ever! Awful  
death,

I wish yet fear to clasp thee! Not  
one moment

Of dreamless sleep! O dear and  
blessed peace!

Why dost thou shroud thy vestal  
purity

In penury and dungeons! wherefore  
lurkest

With danger, death, and solitude:  
yet shunn'st

The palace I have built thee! Sacred  
peace!

Oh visit me but once, and pitying shed  
One drop of balm upon my withered  
soul.

Vain man! that palace is the virtu-  
ous heart,

And peace defileth not her snowy robe  
In such a shed as thine. Hark! yet  
he mutters;

His slumbers are but varied agonics,  
They prey like scorpions on the springs  
of life.

There needeth not the hell that bigots  
frame

To punish those who err: earth in it-  
self

Contains at once the evil and the cure;  
And all-sufficing nature can chastise  
Those who transgress her law,—she  
only knows

How justly to proportion to the fault  
The punishment it merits.

Is it strange  
That this poor wretch should pride  
him in his woe?

Take pleasure in his abjectness, and  
hug

The scorpion that consumes him? Is  
it strange

That, placed on a conspicuous throne  
of thorns, mured-

Grasping an iron sceptre, and im-  
Within a splendid prison, whose stern  
bounds

Shut him from all that's good or dear  
on earth,

His soul asserts not its humanity?  
That man's mild nature rises not in  
war

Against a king's employ? No—'tis  
not strange,

He, like the vulgar, thinks, feels, acts,  
and lives

Just as his father did; the uncon-  
quered powers

Of precedent and custom interpose  
Between a king and virtue. Stranger

yet,

To those who know not nature, nor  
deduce

The future from the present, it may  
seem,

That not one slave, who suffers from  
the crimes

Of this unnatural being; not one  
wretch,



Whose children famish, and whose  
nuptial bed  
Is earth's unpitying bosom, rears an  
arm

To dash him from his throne !

Those gilded flies  
That, basking in the sunshine of a  
court,

Fatten on its corruption !—what are  
they ?

—The drones of the community ;  
they feed

On the mechanic's labour ; the starved  
hind

For them compels the stubborn  
glebe to yield

Its unshared harvests ; and yon squa-  
lid form,

Leaner than fleshless misery, that  
wastes

A sunless life in the unwholesome  
mine,

Drags out in labour a protracted  
death,

To glut their grandeur ; many faint  
with toil,

That few may know the cares and  
woe of sloth.

Whence, thinkest thou, kings and  
parasites arose ?

Whence that unnatural line of drones,  
who heap

Toil and unvanquishable penury  
On those who build their palaces, and  
bring

Their daily bread ? —From vice,  
black, loathsome vice ;

From rapine, madness, treachery, and  
wrong ;

From all that genders misery, and  
makes

Of earth this thorny wilderness ; from  
lust,

Revenge, and murder.—And when  
reason's voice,

Loud as the voice of nature, shall  
have waked

The nations ; and mankind perceive  
that vice

Is discord, war, and misery ; that vir-  
tue

Is peace, and happiness, and har-  
mony ;

When man's maturer nature shall dis-  
dain

The playthings of its childhood ;—  
kingly glare

Will lose its power to dazzle ; its  
authority

Will silently pass by ; the gorgeous  
throne

Shall stand unnoticed in the regal hall,  
Fast falling to decay ; whilst false-  
hood's trade

Shall be as hateful and unprofitable  
As that of truth is now.

Where is the fame  
Which the vain-glorious mighty of  
the earth

Seek to eternise ? Oh ! the faintest  
sound

From time's light footfall, the minut-  
est wave

That swells the flood of ages, whelms  
in nothing

The unsubstantial bubble. Ay ! to-  
day,

Stern is the tyrant's mandate, red the  
gaze

That flashes desolation, strong the arm  
That scatters multitudes. To-mor-  
row comes !

That mandate is a thunder-peal that  
died

[flash]  
In ages past ; that gaze, a transient  
On which the midnight closed, and on  
that arm

The worm has made his meal.

The virtuous man  
Who, great in his humility, as kings  
Are little in their grandeur ; he who  
leads

Invincibly a life of resolute good,  
And stands amid the silent dungeon-  
depths

More free and fearless than the trem-  
bling judge,

Who, clothed in venal power, vainly  
strove

To bind the impassive spirit ; when  
he falls,

His mild eye beams benevolence no  
more ;

Withered the hand outstretched but  
to relieve ;

Sunk reason's simple eloquence, that  
rolled

But to appal the guilty. Yes ! the  
grave

Hath quenched that eye, and death's  
relentless frost

Withered that arm : but the unfading  
fame  
Which virtue hangs upon its votary's  
tomb ;  
The deathless memory of that man,  
whom kings  
Call to their mind and tremble ; the  
remembrance  
With which the happy spirit contem-  
plates  
Its well-spent pilgrimage on earth,  
Shall never pass away.

Nature rejects the monarch, not the  
man ;  
The subject, not the citizen : for kings  
And subjects, mutual foes, for ever  
play  
A losing game into each other's hands,  
Whose stakes are vice and misery.  
The man  
Of virtuous soul commands not, nor  
obeys.  
Power, like a desolating pestilence,  
Pollutes whate'er it touches ; and  
obedience,  
Bane of all genius, virtue, freedom,  
truth,  
• Makes slaves of men, and of the hu-  
man frame  
A mechanized automaton.

When Nero,  
High over flaming Rome, with sa-  
vage joy  
Lowered like a fiend, drank with en-  
raptured ear  
The shrieks of agonizing death, be-  
held [felt  
The frightful desolation spread, and  
A new-created sense within his soul  
Thrill to the sight, and vibrate to the  
sound ;  
Thinkest thou his grandeur had not  
overcome  
The force of human kindness ? and,  
• when Rome,  
With one stern blow, hurled not the  
tyrant down, •  
Crushed not the arm, red with her  
dearest blood,  
Had not submissive abjectness des-  
troyed  
Nature's suggestions ?

Look on yonder earth :  
The golden harvests spring ; the un-  
failing sun

Sheds light and life ; the fruits, the  
flowers, the trees,  
Arise in due succession ; all things  
speak  
Peace, harmony, and love. The Uni-  
verse,  
In nature's silent eloquence, declares,  
That all fulfil the works of love and  
joy,—  
All but the outcast, Man. He fabri-  
cates  
The sword which stabs his peace ; he  
cherisheth  
The snakes that gnaw his heart ; he  
raiseth up  
The tyrant, whose delight is in his woe,  
Whose sport is in his agony. Yon  
sun,  
Lights it the great alone ? Yon sil-  
ver beams,  
Sleep they less sweetly on the cottage  
thatch,  
Than on the dome of kings ? Is  
mother earth  
A step-dame to her numerous sons,  
who earn  
Her unshared gifts with unremitting  
toil ;  
A mother only to those puling babes  
Who, nursed in ease and luxury,  
make men  
The playthings of their babyhood,  
and mar,  
In self-important childishness, the  
peace  
Which men alone appreciate ?

Spirit of Nature ! no !  
The pure diffusion of thy essence  
throbs  
Alike in every human heart.  
Thou, aye, erectest there  
Thy throne of power unappeal-  
able :  
Thou art the judge beneath  
whose nod  
Man's brief and frail authority  
Is powerless as the wind  
That passeth idly by.  
• Thine the tribunal which surpasseth  
The show of human justice,  
As God surpasses man.

Spirit of Nature ! thou  
Life of interminable multitudes ;  
Soul of those mighty spheres

Whose changeless paths through  
 Heaven's deep silence lie;  
 Soul of that smallest being,  
 The dwelling of whose life  
 Is one faint April sun-gleam;—  
 Man, like these passive things,  
 Thy will unconsciously fulfilleth:  
 Like theirs, his age of endless  
 peace,  
 Which time is fast maturing,  
 Will swiftly, surely, come;  
 And the unbounded frame, which  
 thou pervadest,  
 Will be without a flaw  
 Marring its perfect symmetry.

## IV

How beautiful this night! the  
 balmiest sigh,  
 Which vernal zephyrs breathe in  
 evening's ear,  
 Were discord to the speaking quiet-  
 ude  
 That wraps this moveless scene.  
 Heaven's ebony vault,  
 Studded with stars unutterably  
 bright,  
 Through which the moon's unclouded  
 grandeur rolls,  
 Seems like a canopy which love has  
 spread  
 To curtain her sleeping world. Yon  
 gentle hills,  
 Robed in a garment of untrodden  
 snow;  
 Yon darksome rocks, whence icicles  
 depend,  
 So stainless that their white and  
 glittering spires  
 Tinge not the moon's pure beam;  
 yon castled steep,  
 Whose banner hangeth o'er the time-  
 worn tower  
 So idly, that rapt fancy deemeth it  
 A metaphor of peace;—all form a  
 scene  
 Where musing solitude might love to  
 lift  
 Her soul above this sphere of earthli-  
 ness;  
 Where silence undisturbed might  
 watch alone,  
 So cold, so bright, so still.  
 The orb of day,  
 In southern climes, o'er ocean's  
 waveless field

Sinks sweetly smiling: not the  
 faintest breath  
 Steals o'er the unruffled deep; the  
 clouds of eve  
 Reflect unmoved the lingering beam  
 of day;  
 And vesper's image on the western  
 main  
 Is beautifully still. To-morrow  
 comes:  
 Cloud upon cloud, in dark and deep-  
 ening mass,  
 Roll o'er the blackened waters; the  
 deep roar  
 Of distant thunder mutters awfully;  
 Tempest unfolds its pinion o'er the  
 gloom  
 That shrouds the boiling surge; the  
 pitiless fiend,  
 With all his winds and lightnings,  
 tracks his prey;  
 The torn deep yawns,—the vessel  
 finds a grave  
 Beneath its jagged gulf.  
 Ah! whence yon glare  
 That fires the arch of heaven!—that  
 dark red smoke  
 Blotting the silver moon? The stars  
 are quenched  
 In darkness, and the pure and  
 spangling snow  
 Gleams faintly through the gloom  
 that gathers round.  
 Hark to that roar, whose swift and  
 deafening peals  
 In countless echoes through the  
 mountains ring,  
 Startling pale midnight on her starry  
 throne!  
 Now swells the intermingling din;  
 the jar [bomb;  
 Frequent and frightful of the bursting  
 The falling beam, the shriek, the  
 groan, the shout,  
 The ceaseless clangor, and the rush  
 of men  
 Inebriate with rage:—loud, and more  
 loud  
 The discord grows; till pale death  
 shuts the scene,  
 And o'er the conqueror and the  
 conquered draws  
 His cold and bloody shroud.—Of all  
 the men  
 Whom day's departing beam saw  
 blooming there

In proud and vigorous health ; of all  
the hearts  
That beat with anxious life at sun-set  
there ;  
How few survive, how few are beating  
now !  
All is deep silence, like the fearful  
calm.  
That slumbers in the storm's por-  
tentous pause ;  
Save when the frantic wail of widowed  
love,  
Comes shuddering on the blast, or the  
faint moan  
With which some soul bursts from the  
frame of clay  
Wrapt round its struggling powers.  
The grey morn  
Dawns on the mournful scene ; the  
sulphurous smoke  
Before the icy wind slow rolls away,  
And the bright beams of frosty morn-  
ing dance  
Along the spangling snow. There  
tracks of blood  
Even to the forest's depth, and scat-  
tered arms,  
And lifeless warriors, whose hard line-  
aments  
Death's self could change not, mark  
the dreadful path  
Of the outsallying victors : far behind,  
Black ashes note where their proud  
city stood.  
Within yon forest is a gloomy glen—  
Each tree which guards its darkness  
from the day,  
Waves o'er a warrior's tomb.  
I see thee shrink,  
Surpassing Spirit !—wert thou hu-  
man else ?  
I see a shade of doubt and horror fleet  
Across thy stainless features : yet  
fear not ;  
This is no unconnected misery,  
Nor stands uncaused, and irretriev-  
able.  
Man's evil nature, that apology  
Which kings who rule, and cowards  
who crouch, set up  
For their unnumbered crimes, sheds  
not the blood  
Which desolates the discord-wasted  
land :  
From kings, and priests, and states-  
men, war arose,

Whose safety is man's deep unbettered  
woe,  
Whose grandeur his debasement.  
Let the axe  
Strike at the root, the poison-tree will  
fall ;  
And where its venom'd exhalations  
spread  
Ruin, and death, and woe, where mil-  
lions lay  
Quenching the serpent's famine, and  
their bones  
Bleaching unburied in the putrid blast,  
A garden shall arise, in loveliness  
Surpassing fabled Eden.  
Hath Nature's soul,  
That formed this world so beautiful,  
that spread  
Earth's lap with plenty, and life's  
smallest chord  
Strung to unchanging unison, that  
gave  
The happy birds their dwelling in the  
grove,  
That yielded to the wanderers of the  
deep  
The lovely silence of the unfathomed  
main,  
And filled the meanest worm that  
crawls in dust  
With spirit, thought, and love ; on  
Man alone  
Partial in causeless malice, wantonly  
Heaped ruin, vice, and slavery ; his  
soul [afar  
Blasted with withering curses ; placed  
The meteor happiness, that shuns his  
grasp,  
But serving on the frightful gulf to  
glare,  
Rent wide beneath his footsteps ?  
Nature !—no !  
Kings, priests, and statesmen blast  
the human flower,  
Even in its tender bud ; their influ-  
ence darts  
Like subtle poison through the blood-  
less veins  
Of desolate society. The child,  
Ere he can lisp his mother's sacred  
name,  
Swells with the unnatural pride of  
crime, and lifts  
His baby-sword even in a hero's mood.  
This infant arm becomes the bloodiest  
 scourge

Of devastated earth ; whilst specious names	That for uncounted ages has remained.
Learnt in soft childhood's unsuspecting hour,	The moveless pillar of a mountain's weight
Serve as the sophisms with which manhood dims	Is active living spirit. Every grain
Bright reason's ray, and sanctifies the sword	Is sentient both in unity and part,
Upraised to shed a brother's innocent blood.	And the minutest atom comprehends
Let priest-led slaves cease to proclaim that man	A world of loves and hatreds ; these beget
Inherits vice and misery, when force	Evil and good : hence truth and falsehood spring ;
And falsehood hang even o'er the cradled babe,	Hence will, and thought, and action, all the germs
Stifling with rudest grasp all natural good.	Of pain or pleasure, sympathy or hate,
Ah ! to the stranger-soul, when first it peeps	That variegate the eternal universe.
From its new tenement, and looks abroad	Soul is not more polluted than the beams
For happiness and sympathy, how stern	Of heaven's pure orb, ere round their rapid lines
And desolate a tract is this wide world !	The taint of earth-born atmospheres arise.
How withered all the buds of natural good !	Man is of soul and body, formed for deeds
No shade, no shelter from the sweeping storms	Of high resolve ; on fancy's boldest wing
Of pitiless power ! On its wretched frame,	To soar unwearied, fearlessly to turn
Poisoned, perchance, by the disease and woe	The keenest pangs to peacefulness, and taste
Heaped on the wretched parent, whence it sprung,	The joys which mingled sense and spirit yield. [woe,
By morals, law, and custom, the pure winds	Or he is formed for abjectness and To grovel on the dunghill of his fear.
Of heaven, that renovate the insect tribes,	To shrink at every sound, to quench the flame
May breathe not. The untainting light of day	Of natural love in sensualism, to know
May visit not its longings. It is bound	That hour as blest when on his worthless days
Ere it has life : yea, all the chains are forged	The frozen hand of death shall set its seal,
Long ere its being : all liberty and love	Yet fear the cure, though hating the disease.
And peace is torn from its defencelessness ;	The one is man that shall hereafter be ;
Cursed from its birth, even from its cradle doomed	The other, man as vice has made him now.
To abjectness and bondage !	War is the statesman's game, the priest's delight,
Throughout this varied and eternal world	The lawyer's jest, the hired assassin's trade,
Soul is the only clement, the block	And, to those royal murderers, whose mean thrones
	Are bought by crimes of treachery and gore,
	The bread they eat, the staff on which they lean,

Guards, garbed in blood-red livery,  
surround  
Their palaces, participate the crimes  
That force defends, and from a nation's rage  
Secure the crown, which all the curses reach  
That famine, frenzy, woe and penury breathe.  
These are the hired bravoës who defend  
The tyrant's throne—the bullies of his fear:  
These are the sinks and channels of worst vice,  
The refuse of society, the dregs  
Of all that is most vile: their cold hearts blend  
Deceit with sternness, ignorance with pride,  
All that is mean and villainous, with rage  
Which hopelessness of good, and self-contempt,  
Alone might kindle; they are decked in wealth,  
Honour and power, then are sent abroad  
To do their work. The pestilence that stalks  
In gloomy triumph through some Eastern land  
Is less destroying. They cajole with gold,  
And promises of fame, the thoughtless youth  
Already crushed with servitude: he knows  
His wretchedness too late, and cherishes  
Repentance for his ruin, when his doom  
Is sealed in gold and blood!  
Those too the tyrant serve, who skilled to snare  
The feet of justice in the toils of law,  
Stand, ready to oppress the weaker still;  
And, right or wrong, will vindicate for gold,  
Sneering at public virtue, which beneath  
Their pitiless tread lies torn and trampled, where  
Honour sits smiling at the sale of truth.

Then grave and hoary-headed hypocrites,  
Without a hope, a passion, or a love,  
Who, through a life of luxury and lies,  
Have crept by flattery to the seats of power,  
Support the system whence their honours flow—  
They have three words; well tyrants know their use,  
Well pay them for the loan, with usury  
Torn from a bleeding world!—God, Hell, and Heaven.  
A vengeful, pitiless, and almighty fiend,  
Whose mercy is a nick-name for the rage  
Of tameless tigers hungering for blood.  
Hell, a red gulf of everlasting fire,  
Where poisonous and undying worms prolong  
Eternal misery to those hapless slaves  
Whose life has been a penance for its crimes.  
And Heaven, a meed for those who dare belie  
Their human nature, quake, believe, and cringe  
Before the mockeries of earthly power.  
These tools the tyrant tempers to his work,  
Wields in his wiath, and as he wills, destroys,  
Omnipotent in wickedness: the while  
Youth springs, age moulders, manhood tamely does  
His bidding, bribed by short-lived joys to lend  
Force to the weakness of his trembling arm.  
They rise, they fall; one generation comes  
Yielding its harvest to destruction's scythe.  
It fades, another blossoms: yet behold!  
Red glows the tyrant's stamp-mark on its bloom,  
Withering and cankering deep its passive prime.

He has invented lying words and  
 modes,  
 Empty and vain as his own coreless  
 heart;  
 Evasive meanings, nothings of much  
 sound,  
 To lure the heedless victim to the  
 toils  
 Spread round the valley of its para-  
 dise.

Look to thyself, priest, conqueror, or  
 prince!  
 Whether thy trade is falsehood, and  
 thy lusts  
 Deep wallow in the earnings of the  
 poor,  
 With whom thy master was:—or  
 thou delight'st  
 In numbering o'er the myriads of thy  
 slain,  
 All misery weighing nothing in the  
 scale  
 Against thy short-lived fame; or  
 thou dost load  
 With cowardice and crime the groan-  
 ing land,  
 A pomp-fed king. Look to thy  
 wretched self!  
 Ay, art thou not the veriest slave  
 that e'er  
 Crawled on the loathing earth? Are  
 not thy days  
 Days of unsatisfying listlessness?  
 Dost thou not cry, ere night's long  
 rack is o'er,  
 'When will the morning come'? Is  
 not thy youth  
 A vain and feverish dream of sensual-  
 ism?  
 Thy manhood blighted with unripe  
 disease?  
 Are not thy views of unregretted  
 death  
 Dread, comfortless, and horrible?  
 Thy mind,  
 Is it not morbid as thy nerveless  
 frame,  
 Incapable of judgment, hope, or love?  
 And dost thou wish the errors to sur-  
 vive  
 That bar thee from all sympathies of  
 good,  
 After the miserable interest  
 Thou hold'st in their protraction?  
 When the grave

Has swallowed up thy memory and  
 thyself,  
 Dost thou desire the bane that poisons  
 earth  
 To twine its roots around thy confined  
 clay,  
 Spring from thy bones, and blossom  
 on thy tomb,  
 That of its fruit thy babes may eat  
 and die?

v

Thus do the generations of the earth  
 Go to the grave, and issue from the  
 womb,  
 Surviving still the imperishable  
 change  
 That renovates the world; even as  
 the leaves  
 Which the keen frost-wind of the  
 waning year  
 Has scattered on the forest soil, and  
 heaped  
 For many seasons there, though long  
 they choke,  
 Loading with loathsome rottenness  
 the land,  
 All germs of promise. Yet when the  
 tall trees  
 From which they fell, shorn of their  
 lovely shapes, [there,  
 Lie level with the earth to moulder  
 They fertilise the land they long de-  
 formed,  
 Till from the breathing lawn a forest  
 springs  
 Of youth, integrity, and loveliness,  
 Like that which gave it life, to spring  
 and die.  
 Thus suicidal selfishness, that blights  
 The fairest feelings of the opening  
 heart,  
 Is destined to decay, whilst from the  
 soil  
 Shall spring all virtue, all delight, all  
 love,  
 And judgment cease to wage unna-  
 tural war  
 With passion's unsubduable array.  
 Twin-sister of religion, selfishness!  
 Rival in crime and falsehood, aping all  
 The wanton horrors of her bloody  
 play;  
 Yet frozen, unimpassioned, spiritless,  
 Shunning the light, and owning not  
 its name:

Compelled, by its deformity, to screen  
With flimsy veil of justice and of  
right,  
Its unattractive lineaments, that  
scare  
All, save the brood of ignorance : at  
once  
The cause and the effect of tyranny ;  
Unblushing, hardened, sensual, and  
vile ;  
Dead to all love but of its abjectness,  
With heart impassive by more noble  
powers  
Than unshared pleasure, sordid gain,  
or fame :  
Despising its own miserable being,  
Which still it longs, yet fears, to dis-  
enthral.

Hence commerce springs, the venal  
interchange  
Of all that human art or nature yield ;  
Which wealth should purchase not,  
but want demand,  
And natural kindness hasten to sup-  
ply  
From the full fountain of its bound-  
less love,  
For ever stifled, drained, and tainted  
now.  
Commerce ! beneath whose poison-  
breathing shade  
No solitary virtue dares to spring ;  
But poverty and wealth with equal  
hand  
Scatter their withering curses, and  
unfold  
The doors of premature and violent  
death,  
To pining famine and full-fed disease,  
To all that shares the lot of human  
life,  
Which poisoned body and soul, scarce  
drags the chain  
That lengthens as it goes and clanks  
behind.

Commerce has set the mark of selfish-  
ness,  
The signet of its all-enslaving power,  
Upon a shining ore, and called it gold ;  
Before whose image bow the vulgar  
great,  
The vainly rich, the miserable proud,  
The mob of peasants, nobles, priests,  
and kings,

S.P.

And with blind feelings reverence the  
power  
That grinds them to the dust of  
misery.  
But in the temple of their hireling  
hearts  
Gold is a living god, and rules in scorn  
All earthly things but virtue.

Since tyrants, by the sale of human  
life,  
Heap luxuries to their sensualism,  
and fame  
To their wide-wasting and insatiate  
pride,  
Success has sanctioned to a credulous  
world

The ruin, the disgrace, the woe of war.  
His hosts of blind and unresisting  
dupes [in-  
The despot numbers ; from his cab-  
These puppets of his schemes he  
moves at will,  
Even as the slaves by force or famine  
driven

Beneath a vulgar master, to perform  
A task of cold and brutal drudgery ;—  
Hardened to hope, insensible to fear,  
Scarce living pulleys of a dead ma-  
chine,

Mere wheels of work and articles of  
trade,  
That grace the proud and noisy pomp  
of wealth !

The harmony and happiness of man  
Yield to the wealth of nations ; that  
which lifts

His nature to the heaven of its pride,  
Is bartered for the poison of his soul ;  
The weight that drags to earth his  
towering hopes,

Blighting all prospect but of selfish  
gain,

Withering all passion but of slavish  
fear,

Extinguishing all free and generous  
love

Of enterprise and daring, even the  
pulse

That fancy kindles in the beating  
heart

To mingle with sensation, it de-  
stroys,—

Leaves nothing but the sordid lust of  
self,



<p>The grovelling hope of interest and gold,          Unqualified, unmingled, unredeemed          Even by hypocrisy. (</p> <p style="text-align: right;">And statesmen boast</p> <p>Of wealth! The wordy eloquence          that lives</p> <p>After the ruin of their hearts, can gild          The bitter poison of a nation's woe,          Can turn the worship of the servile          mob</p> <p>To their corrupt and glaring idol,          Fame,          From Virtue, trampled by its iron          tread,</p> <p>Although its dazzling pedestal be          raised</p> <p>Amid the horrors of a limb-strewn          field,</p> <p>With desolated dwellings smoking          round.</p> <p>The man of ease, who, by his warm          fireside,</p> <p>To deeds of charitable intercourse          And bare fulfilment of the common          laws</p> <p>Of decency and prejudice, confines          The struggling nature of his human          heart,</p> <p>Is duped by their cold sophistry; he          sheds [wreck</p> <p>A passing tear perchance upon the          Of earthly peace, when near his dwell-          ing's door</p> <p>The frightful waves are driven,—when          his son</p> <p>Is murdered by the tyrant, or religion          Drives his wife raving mad. But          the poor man,</p> <p>Whose life is misery, and fear, and          care;</p> <p>Whom the morn wakens but to fruit-          less toil;</p> <p>Who ever hears his famished off-          spring's scream,</p> <p>Whom their pale mother's uncom-          plaining gaze</p> <p>For ever meets, and the proud rich          man's eye</p> <p>Flashing command, and the heart-          breaking scene</p> <p>Of thousands like himself; he little          heeds</p> <p>The rhetoric of tyranny, his hate          Is quenchless as his wrongs, he laughs          to scorn</p>	<p>The vain and bitter mockery of words,          Feeling the horror of the tyrant's          deeds,          And unrestrained but by the arm of          power,          That knows and dreads his enmity.</p> <p>The iron rod of penury still compels          Her wretched slave to bow the knee          to wealth,</p> <p>And poison, with unprofitable toil,          A life too void of solace to confirm          The very chains that bind him to his          doom.</p> <p>Nature, impartial in munificence,          Has gifted man with all-subduing          will:</p> <p>Matter, with all its transitory shapes,          Lies subjected and plastic at his feet,          That, weak from bondage, tremble as          they tread</p> <p>How many a rustic Milton has passed          by,          Stifling the speechless longings of his          heart,</p> <p>In unremitting drudgery and care!          How many a vulgar Cato has com-          pelled</p> <p>His energies, no longer tameless then,          To mould a pin, or fabricate a nail!</p> <p>How many a Newton, to whose pass-          ive ken</p> <p>Those mighty spheres that gem in-          finity</p> <p>Were only specks of tinsel, fixed in          heaven</p> <p>To light the midnights of his native          town!</p> <p>Yet every heart contains perfection's          germ:</p> <p>The wisest of the sages of the earth,          That ever from the stores of reason          drew</p> <p>Science and truth, and virtue's dread-          less tone,</p> <p>Were but a weak and inexperienced          boy,</p> <p>Proud, sensual, unimpassioned, unim-          bued</p> <p>With pure desire and universal love,          Compared to that high being, of          cloudless brain,</p> <p>Untainted passion, elevated will,          Which death (who even would linger          long in awe</p>
--	---

Within his noble presence, and beneath

His changeless eye-beam), might alone subdue.

Him, every slave now dragging through the filth

Of some corrupted city his sad life,  
Pining with famine, swoln with luxury,

Blunting the keenness of his spiritual sense

With narrow schemings and unworthy cares,

Or madly rushing through all violent crime,

To move the deep stagnation of his soul,---

Might imitate and equal.

But mean lust Has bound its chains so tight about the earth,

That all within it but the virtuous man

Is venal: gold or fame will surely The price prefixed by selfishness, to all But him of resolute and unchanging will;

Whom, nor the plaudits of a servile crowd,

Nor the vile joys of tainting luxury, Can bribe to yield his elevated soul

To tyranny or falsehood, though they wield

With blood-red hand the sceptre of the world.

All things are sold: the very light of heaven

Is venal; earth's unsparring gifts of love,

The smallest and most despicable things

That lurk in the abysses of the deep, All objects of our life, even life itself, And the poor pittance which the laws allow

Of liberty, the fellowship of man, Those duties which his heart of human love

Should urge him to perform instinctively,

Are bought and sold, as in a public mart

Of undisguising selfishness, that sets On each its price, the stamp-mark of her reign.

Even love is sold; the solace of all woe

Is turned to deadliest agony, old age Shivers in selfish beauty's loathing arms,

And youth's corrupted impulses prepare

A life of horror from the blighting bane

Of commerce: whilst the pestilence that springs

From unenjoying sensualism, has filled

All human life with hydra-headed woes.

Falsehood demands but gold to pay the pangs

Of outraged conscience; for the slavish priest

Sets no great value on his hireling faith:

A little passing pomp, some servile souls,

Whom cowardice itself might safely chain,

Or the spare mite of avarice could bribe

To deck the triumph of their languid zeal,

Can make him minister to tyranny. More daring crime requires a loftier

need:

Without a shudder the slave-soldier lends

His arm to murderous deeds, and steels his heart,

When the dread eloquence of dying men,

Low mingling on the lonely field of fame,

Assails that nature whose applause he sells

For the gross blessings of the patriot mob,

For the vile gratitude of heartless kings,

And for a cold world's good word,—viler still!

There is a nobler glory which survives

Until our being fades, and, solacing All human care, accompanies its

change; Deserts not virtue in the dungeon's gloom,

And, in the precincts of the palace,  
 guides  
 Its footsteps through that labyrinth  
 of crime ;  
 Imbues his lineaments with daunt-  
 lessness,  
 Even when, from power's avenging  
 hand, he takes  
 Its sweetest, last and noblest title—  
 death ;  
 —The consciousness of good, which  
 neither gold,  
 Nor sordid fame, nor hope of hea-  
 venly bliss,  
 Can purchase ; but a life of resolute  
 good,  
 Unalterable will, quenchless desire  
 Of universal happiness, the heart  
 That beats with it in unison, the brain,  
 Whose ever-wakeful wisdom toils to  
 change  
 Reason's rich stores for its eternal  
 weal.

This commerce of sincerest virtue  
 needs  
 No mediative signs of selfishness,  
 No jealous intercourse of wretched  
 gain,  
 No balancings of prudence, cold and  
 long ;  
 In just and equal measure all is  
 weighed,  
 One scale contains the sum of human  
 weal,  
 And one, the good man's heart.

How vainly seek  
 The selfish for that happiness denied  
 To aught but virtue ! Blind and  
 hardened, they  
 Who hope for peace amid the storms  
 of care,  
 Who covet power they know not how  
 to use,  
 And sigh for pleasure they refuse In  
 give :—  
 Madly they frustrate still their own  
 designs ;  
 And, where they hope that quiet to  
 enjoy  
 Which virtue pictures, bitterness of  
 soul,  
 Pining regrets, and vain repentances,  
 Disease, disgust, and lassitude, per-  
 vade  
 Their valueless and miserable lives.

But hoary-headed selfishness has felt  
 Its deathblow, and is tottering to  
 the grave :  
 A brighter morn awaits the human  
 day,  
 When every transfer of earth's natural  
 gifts  
 Shall be a commerce of good words  
 and works ;  
 When poverty and wealth, the thirst  
 of fame,  
 The fear of infamy, disease and woe,  
 War with its million horrors, and  
 fierce hell,  
 Shall live but in the memory of  
 time,  
 Who, like a penitent libertine, shall  
 start,  
 Look back, and shudder at his younger  
 years.

## VI

ALL touch, all eye, all ear,  
 The Spirit felt the Fairy's burning  
 speech.  
 O'er the thin texture of its frame,  
 The varying periods painted, chang-  
 ing glows ;  
 As on a summer even,  
 When soul-enfolding music floats  
 around,  
 The stainless mirror of the lake  
 Re-images the eastern gloom,  
 Mingling convulsively its purple hues  
 With sunset's burnished gold.

Then thus the Spirit spoke :  
 It is a wild and miserable world !  
 Thoray, and full of care,  
 Which every fiend can make his prey  
 at will.  
 O Fairy ! in the lapse of years,  
 Is there no hope in store ?  
 Will yon vast suns roll on  
 Interminably, still illuming  
 The night of so many wretched  
 souls,  
 And see no hope for them ?  
 Will not the universal spirit e'er  
 Revivify this withered limb of Hea-  
 ven ?

The Fairy calmly smiled  
 to comfort, and a kindling gleam of  
 hope  
 Suffused the Spirit's lineaments.

Oh ! rest thee tranquil ; chase those  
fearful doubts,  
Which ne'er could rack an everlasting  
soul,  
That sees the chains which bind it to  
its doom.

Yes ! crime and misery are in yonder  
earth,  
Falsehood, mistake, and lust ;  
But the eternal world  
Contains at once the evil and the cure.  
Some eminent in virtue shall start up,  
Even in perversest time :  
The truths of their pure lips, that  
never die,  
Shall bind the scorpion falsehood with  
a wreath  
Of ever-living flame,  
Until the monster sting itself to death.

How sweet a scene will earth be-  
come !  
Of purest spirits, a pure dwelling-  
place,  
Symphonious with the planetary  
spheres ;  
When man, with changeless nature  
coalescing,  
• Will undertake regeneration's work,  
When its ungenial poles no longer  
point  
To the red and baleful sun  
That faintly twinkles there.

Spirit, on yonder earth,  
Falsehood now triumphs ; deadly  
power  
Has fixed its seal upon the lip of  
truth !

Madness and misery are there !  
The happiest is most wretched ! Yet  
confide  
Until pure health-drops, from the cup  
of joy,  
Fall like a dew of balm upon the  
world.

Now, to the scene I show, in silence  
turn,  
And read the blood-stained charter of  
all woe,  
Which nature soon, with re-creating  
hand,  
Will blot in mercy from the book of  
earth.  
How bold the flight of passion's wan-  
dering wing,

How swift the step of reason's firmer  
tread,  
How calm and sweet the victories of  
life,  
How terrorless the triumph of the  
grave !  
How powerless were the mightiest  
monarch's arm,  
Vain his loud threat, and impotent  
his frown !  
How ludicrous the priest's dogmatic  
roar !  
The weight of his exterminating curse  
How light ! and his affected charity,  
To suit the pressure of the changing  
times,  
What palpable deceit !—but for thy  
aid,  
Religion ! but for thee, prolific fiend,  
Who peoplest earth with demons,  
hell with men,  
And heaven with slaves !

Thou taintest all thou look'st upon !  
—the stars,  
Which on thy cradle beamed so  
brightly sweet,  
Were gods to the distempered play-  
fulness

Of thy untutored infancy : the trees,  
The grass, the clouds, the mountains,  
and the sea,  
All living things that walk, swim,  
creep, or fly,  
Were gods the sun had homage, and  
the moon

Her worshipper. Then thou be-  
camest a boy,  
More daring in thy frenzies : every  
shape, [wild,  
Monstrous or vast, or beautifully  
Which from sensation's relics, fancy  
culls ;

The spirits of the air, the shuddering  
ghost,  
The genii of the elements, the powers  
That gave a shape to nature's varied  
works,

Had life and place in the corrupt be-  
lief

Of thy blind heart : yet still, thy  
youthful hands  
Were pure of human blood. Then  
manhood gave  
Its strength and ardour to thy  
frenzied brain ;

Thine eager gaze scanned the stupendous scene,  
 Whose wonders mocked the knowledge of thy pride,  
 Their everlasting and unchanging laws  
 Reproached thine ignorance. Awhile thou stoodst  
 Baffled and gloomy ; then thou didst sum up  
 The elements of all that thou didst know ;  
 The changing seasons, winter's leafless reign,  
 The budding of the heaven-breathing trees,  
 The eternal orbs that beautify the night,  
 The sunrise, and the setting of the moon,  
 Earthquakes and wars, and poisons and disease,  
 And all their causes, to an abstract point  
 Converging, thou didst bend, and call'd it God !  
 The self-sufficing, the omnipotent,  
 The merciful, and the avenging God !  
 Who, prototype of human misrule, sits  
 High in heaven's realm, upon a golden throne,  
 Even like an earthly king ; and whose dread work,  
 Hell, gapes for ever for the unhappy slaves  
 Of fate, whom he created in his sport,  
 To triumph in their torments when they fell !  
 Earth heard the name ; earth trembled, as the smoke  
 Of his revenge ascended up to heaven,  
 Blotting the constellations ; and the cries  
 Of millions butchered in sweet confidence  
 And unsuspecting peace, even when the bonds  
 Of safety were confirmed by wordy oaths  
 Sworn in his dreadful name, rung through the land ;  
 Whilst innocent babes writhed on thy stubborn spear,  
 And thou didst laugh to hear the mother's shriek

Of maniac gladness as the sacred steel  
 Felt cold in her torn entrails !

Religion ! thou wert then a manhood's prime ;  
 But age crept on : one God would not suffice

For senile puerility ; thou framedst  
 A tale to suit thy dotage, and to glut  
 Thy misery-thirsting soul, that the mad fiend

Thy wickedness had pictured, might afford

A plea for sating the unnatural thirst  
 For murder, rapine, violence, and crime,

That still consumed thy being, even when

Thou heardst the step of fate ; — that flames might light

Thy funeral scene, and the shrill horrent shrieks

Of parents dying on the pile that burned

To light their children to thy paths, the roar,

Of the encircling flames, the exulting cries

Of thine apostles, loud commingling there,

Might sate thy hungry ear  
 Even on the bed of death !

But now contempt is mocking thy grey hairs ;

Thou art descending to the darksome grave,

Unhonoured and unpitied, but by those

Whose pride is passing by like thine, and sheds,

Like thine, a glare that fades before the sun

Of truth, and shines but in the dreadful night

That long has lowered above the ruined world.

Throughout these infinite orbs of mingling light,

Of which yon earth is one, is wide diffused

A spirit of activity and life,

That knows no term, cessation, or decay ;

That fades not when the lamp of earthly life,

<p>Extinguished in the dampness of the grave,          Awhile there slumbers, more than when the babe          In the dim newness of its being feels          The impulses of sublunary things,          And all is wonder to unpractised sense :          But, active, steadfast and eternal, still          Guides the fierce whirlwind, in the tempest roars,          Cheers in the day, breathes in the balmy groves,          Strengthens in health, and poisons in disease ;          And in the storm of change, that ceaselessly          Rolls round the eternal universe, and shakes          Its undecaying battlement, presides,          Apportioning with irresistible law          The place each spring of its machine shall fill ;          So that, when waves on waves tumultuous heap          Confusion to the clouds, and fiercely driven          Heaven's lightnings scorch the uprooted ocean fords,          Whilst, to the eye of shipwrecked mariner,          Lone sitting on the bare and shuddering rock,          All seems unlinked contingency and chance :          No atom of this turbulence fulfils          A vague and unnecessitated task,          Or acts but as it must and ought to act.          Even the minutest molecule of light,          That in an April sunbeam's fleeting glow          Fulfils its destined, though invisible work,          The universal Spirit guides ; nor less          When merciless ambition, or mad zeal,          Has led two hosts of dupes to battle-field,          That, blind, they there may dig each other's graves          And call the sad work glory, does it rule          All passions : not a thought, a will, an act,          No working of the tyrant's moody mind,</p>	<p>Nor one misgiving of the slaves who boast          Their servitude, to hide the shame they feel,          Nor the events enchaining every will,          That from the depths of unrecorded time          Have drawn all-influencing virtue, pass          Unrecognised or unforeseen by thee,          Soul of the Universe ! eternal spring          Of life and death, of happiness and woe,          Of all that chequers the phantasmal scene          That floats before our eyes in wavering light,          Which gleams but on the darkness of our prison,          Whose chains and massy walls          We feel but cannot see.          • Spirit of Nature ! all-sufficing Power.          Necessity ! thou mother of the world !          Unlike the God of human error, thou          Requirest no prayers or praises ; the caprice          Of man's weak will belongs no more to thee          Than do the changeful passions of his breast          To thy unvarying harmony : thy slave,          Whose horrible lusts spread misery o'er the world          And the good man, who lifts, with virtuous pride,          His being, in the sight of happiness,          That springs from his own works ; the poison-tree,          Beneath whose shade all life is withered up,          And the fair oak, whose leafy dome affords [love          A temple where the vows of happy          Are register'd, are equal in thy sight :          No love, no hate thou cherishest ; revenge          And favouritism, and worst desire of fame,          Thou knowest not : all that the wide world contains          Are but thy passive instruments, and thou          Regardst them all with an impartial eye</p>
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Whose joy or pain thy nature cannot  
feel,  
Because thou hast not human sense,  
Because thou art not human mind.

Yes ! when the sweeping storm of  
time  
Has sung its death-dirge o'er the  
ruined fanes  
And broken altars of the almighty  
fiend  
Whose name usurps thy honours, and  
the blood  
Through centuries clotted there, has  
floated down  
The tainted flood of ages, shalt thou  
live  
Unchangeable ! A shrine is raised to  
thee,  
Which, nor the tempest breath of  
time,  
Nor the interminable flood,  
Over earth's slight pageant rolling,  
Availeth to destroy,—  
The sensitive extension of the world.  
That wondrous and eternal fane,  
Where pain and pleasure, good and  
evil join,  
To do the will of strong necessity,  
And life in multitudinous shapes,  
Still pressing forward where no term  
can be,  
Like hungry and unresting flame  
Curls round the eternal columns of its  
strength.

## VII

*Spirit.* I WAS an infant when my  
mother went  
To see an atheist burned. She took  
me there :  
The dark-robed priests were met  
around the pile ;  
The multitude was gazing silently ;  
And as the culprit passed with daunt-  
less mien,  
Tempered disdain in his unaltering  
eye,  
Mixed with a quiet smile, shone  
calmly forth :  
The thirsty fire crept round his manly  
limbs ;  
His resolute eyes were scorched to  
blindness soon :  
His death-pang rent my heart ! the  
insensate mob

Uttered a cry of triumph, and I wept.  
Weep not, child ! cried my mother,  
for that man  
Has said, There is no God.

*Fairy.* There is no God !  
Nature confirms the faith his death-  
groan seal'd :  
Let heaven and earth, let man's re-  
volving race,  
His ceaseless generations, tell their  
tale ;  
Let every part depending on the chain  
That links it to the whole, point to the  
hand  
That grasps its term ! Let every seed  
that falls,  
In silent eloquence unfold its store  
Of argument : infinity within,  
Infinity without, belie creation ;  
The exterminable spirit it contains  
Is nature's only God ; but human  
pride  
Is skilful to invent most serious names  
To hide its ignorance.

The name of God  
Has fenced about all crime with holi-  
ness, [pers,  
Himself the creature of his worship ;  
Whose names and attributes and pas-  
sions change,  
Seeva, Buddh, Foh, Jehovah, God, or  
Lord,  
Even with the human dupes who  
build his shrines,  
Still serving o'er the war-polluted  
world  
For desolation's watchword ; whether  
hosts .  
Stain his death-blushing chariot  
wheels, as on  
Triumphantly they roll, whilst Brah-  
mins raise  
A sacred hymn to mingle with the  
groans ;  
Or countless partners of his power  
divide  
His tyranny to weakness ; or the  
smoke  
Of burning towns, the cries of female  
helplessness,  
Unarmed old age, and youth, and in-  
fancy,  
Horribly massacred, ascend to heaven  
In honour of his name ; or, last and  
worst,

Earth groans beneath religion's iron  
age,  
And priests dare babble of a God of  
peace,  
Even whilst their hands are red with  
guiltless blood,  
Murdering the while, uprooting every  
germ  
Of truth, exterminating, spoiling all,  
Making the earth a slaughter-house !

O Spirit ! through the sense  
By which thy inner nature was ap-  
prised  
Of outward shows vague dreams  
have roll'd,  
And varied reminiscences have  
waked  
Tablets that never fade ;  
All things have been imprinted  
there,  
The stars, the sea, the earth, the  
sky,  
Even the unshapeliest lineaments  
Of wild and fleeting visions  
Have left a record there  
To testify of earth.

These are my empire, for to me is  
given  
The wonders of the human world to  
keep,  
And fancy's thin creations to endow  
With manner, being, and reality ;  
Therefore a wondrous phantom, from  
the dreams  
Of human error's dense and purblind  
faith,  
I will evoke, to meet thy questioning.  
Ahasuerus, rise !

A strange and woe-worn wight  
Arose beside the battlement,  
And stood unmoving there.  
His inessential figure cast no shade  
Upon the golden floor ;  
His port and mien bore mark of many  
years,  
And chronicles of untold ancientness  
Were legible within his beamless eye :  
Yet his cheek bore the mark of  
youth ;  
Freshness and vigour knit his manly  
frame ;  
The wisdom of old age was mingled  
there

With youth's primeval daunt-  
lessness ;  
And inexpressible woe,  
Chasten'd by fearless resignation,  
gave  
An awful grace to his all-speaking  
brow.

*Spirit.* Is there a God ?

*Ahasuerus.* Is there a God !—ay,  
an almighty God,  
And vengeful as almighty ! Once  
his voice  
Was heard on earth : earth shuddered  
at the sound ;  
The fiery-visaged firmament ex-  
pressed  
Abhorrence, and the grave of nature  
yawned  
To swallow all the dauntless and the  
good  
That dared to hurl defiance at his  
throne,  
Girt as it was with power. None but  
slaves  
Survived,—cold-blooded slaves, who  
did the work  
Of tyrannous omnipotence ; whose  
souls  
No honest indignation ever urged  
To elevated daring, to one deed  
Which gross and sensual self did not  
pollute.  
These slaves built temples for the  
omnipotent fiend,  
Gorgeous and vast : the costly altars  
smoked  
With human blood, and hideous  
pæans rung  
Through all the long-drawn aisles. A  
murderer heard  
His voice in Egypt, one whose gifts  
and arts  
Had raised him to his eminence in  
power,  
Accomplice of omnipotence in crime,  
And confidant of the all-knowing one.  
These were Jehovah's words.  
From an eternity of idleness  
I, God, awoke ; in seven days' toil  
made earth  
From nothing ; rested, and created  
man ;  
I placed him in a paradise, and there  
Planted the tree of evil, so that he



Might eat and perish, and my soul  
procure  
Wherewith to sate its malice, and to  
turn,  
Even like a heartless conqueror of  
the earth,  
All misery to my fame. The race of  
men  
Chosen to my honour, with impunity  
May sate the lusts I planted in their  
heart.  
Here I command thee hence to lead  
them on,  
Until, with harden'd feet, their con-  
quering troops  
Wade on the promised soil through  
woman's blood,  
And make my name be dreaded  
through the land.  
Yet ever-burning flame and ceaseless  
woe  
Shall be the doom of their eternal  
souls,  
With every soul on this ungrateful  
earth,  
Virtuous or vicious, weak or strong,—  
even all  
Shall perish, to fulfil the blind revenge  
(Which you, to men, call justice) of  
their God.

The murderer's brow  
Quiver'd with horror.  
God omnipotent,  
Is there no mercy? must our punish-  
ment  
Be endless? will long ages roll away,  
And see no term? Oh! wherefore  
hast thou made  
In mockery and wrath this evil earth?  
Mercy becomes the powerful—be but  
just:  
O God! repent and save.  
One way remains:  
I will beget a son, and he shall bear  
The sins of all the world; he shall  
arise  
In an unnoticed corner of the earth,  
And there shall die upon a cross, and  
purge  
The universal crime; so that the few  
On whom my grace descends, those  
who are mark'd  
As vessels to the honour of their God,  
May credit this strange sacrifice, and  
save

Their souls alive: millions shall live  
and die,  
Who ne'er shall call upon their Savi-  
our's name,  
But, unredeemed, go to the gaping  
grave.  
Thousands shall deem it an old  
woman's tale,  
Such as the nurses frighten babes  
withal:  
These in a gulf of anguish and of flame  
Shall curse their reprobation end-  
lessly,  
Yet tenfold pangs shall force them to  
avow,  
Even on their beds of torment, where  
they howl, [doom.  
My honour, and the justice of their  
What then avail their virtuous deeds,  
their thoughts  
Of purity, with radiant genius bright,  
Or lit with human reason's earthly  
ray?  
Many are called, but few will I elect.  
Do thou my bidding, Moses.  
Even the murderer's cheek  
Was blanched with horror, and his  
quivering lips  
Scarce faintly uttered—O almighty  
one,  
I tremble and obey!  
O Spirit! centuries have set their  
seal  
On this heart of many wounds, and  
loaded brain,  
Since the Incarnate came: humbly  
he came,  
Veiling his horrible Godhead in the  
shape  
Of man, scorned by the world, his  
name unheard,  
Save by the rabble of his native town,  
Even as a parish demagogue. He led  
The crowd; he taught them justice,  
truth, and peace,  
In semblance; but he lit within their  
souls  
The quenchless flames of zeal, and  
blest the sword  
He brought on earth to satiate with  
the blood,  
Of truth and freedom his malignant  
soul.  
At length his mortal frame was led to  
death.

I stood beside him : on the torturing  
 cross  
 No pain assailed his unterrestrial  
 sense ;  
 And yet he groaned. Indignantly I  
 summed  
 The massacres and miseries which his  
 name  
 Had sanctioned in my country, and I  
 cried,  
 Go ! go ! in mockery.  
 A smile of godlike malice reillumed  
 His fading lineaments.—I go, he cried,  
 But thou shalt wander o'er the un-  
 quiet earth  
 Eternally.—The dampness of the  
 grave  
 Bathed my imperishable front. I fell,  
 And long lay tranced upon the  
 charmed soil.  
 When I awoke hell burned within my  
 brain,  
 Which staggered on its seat ; for all  
 around  
 The mouldering relics of my kindred  
 lay,  
 Even as the Almighty's ire arrested  
 them,  
 And in their various attitudes of death  
 My murdered children's mute and  
 eyeless skulls  
 Glared ghastly upon me.

But my soul,  
 From sight and sense of the polluting  
 woe  
 Of tyranny, had long learned to pre-  
 fer  
 Hell's freedom to the servitude of  
 heaven.  
 Therefore I rose, and dauntlessly be-  
 gan  
 My lonely and unending pilgrimage,  
 Resolved to wage unweariable war  
 With my almighty tyrant, and to hurl  
 defiance at his impotence to harm  
 beyond the curse I bore. The very  
 hand  
 That barred my passage to the peace-  
 ful grave  
 Has crushed the earth to misery, and  
 given  
 Its empire to the chosen of his slaves.  
 These have I seen, even from the ear-  
 liest dawn  
 Of weak, unstable, and precarious  
 power ;

Then preaching peace, as now they  
 practise war,  
 So, when they turned but from the  
 massacre  
 Of unoffending infidels, to quench  
 Their thirst for ruin in the very blood  
 That flowed in their own veins, and  
 pitiless zeal  
 Froze every human feeling, as the  
 wife  
 Sheathed in her husband's heart the  
 sacred steel,  
 Even whilst its hopes were dreaming  
 of her love ;  
 And friends to friends, brothers to  
 brothers stood  
 Opposed in bloodiest battle-field, and  
 war,  
 Scarce satiable by fate's last death-  
 draught waged,  
 Drunk from the wine-press of the Al-  
 mighty's wrath ;  
 Whilst the red cross, in mockery of  
 peace,  
 Pointed to victory ! When the fray  
 was done,  
 No remnant of the exterminated faith  
 Survived to tell its ruin, but the flesh,  
 With putrid smoke poisoning the  
 atmosphere,  
 That rotted on the half-extinguished  
 pile.

Yes ! I have seen God's worshippers  
 unsheathe  
 The sword of his revenge, when grace  
 descended,  
 Confirming all unnatural impulses,  
 To sanctify their desolating deeds ;  
 And frantic priests waved the ill-  
 omened cross  
 O'er the unhappy earth : then shone  
 the sun  
 On showers of gore from the upflash-  
 ing steel  
 Of safe assassination, and all crime  
 Made stingless by the spirits of the  
 Lord,  
 And blood-red rainbows canopied the  
 land.

Spirit ! no year of my eventful being  
 Has passed unstained by crime and  
 misery,  
 Which flows from God's own faith.  
 I've marked his slaves,

With tongues whose lies are venomous, beguil:  
 The insensate mob, and, whilst one hand was red  
 With murder, feign to stretch the other out  
 For brotherhood and peace; and, that they now  
 Babble of love and mercy, whilst their deeds  
 Are marked with all the narrowness and crime  
 That freedom's young arm dares not yet chastise,  
 Reason may claim our gratitude, who now,  
 Establishing the imperishable throne  
 Of truth, and stubborn virtue, maketh vain  
 The unprevailing malice of my foe,  
 Whose bootless rage heaps torments for the brave,  
 Adds impotent eternities to pain,  
 Whilst keenest disappointment racks his breast  
 To see the smiles of peace around them play,  
 To frustrate or to sanctify their doom.  
 Thus have I stood,—through a wild waste of years  
 Struggling with whirlwinds of mad agony,  
 Yet peaceful, and serene, and self-enshrined,  
 Mocking my powerless tyrant's horrible curse  
 With stubborn and unalterable will,  
 Even as a giant oak, which heaven's fierce flame  
 Had scathed in the wilderness, to stand  
 A monument of fadeless ruin there;  
 Yet peacefully and movelessly it braves  
 The midnight conflict of the wintry storm,  
 As in the sunlight's calm it spreads  
 Its worn and withered arms on high  
 To meet the quiet of a summer's noon.

The Fairy waved her wand:  
 Ahasuerus fled  
 Fast as the shapes of mingled shade and mist,  
 That lurk in the glens of a twilight grove,

Flee from the morning beam:  
 The matter of which dreams are made  
 Not more endowed with actual life  
 Than this phantasmal portraiture  
 Of wandering human thought.

## VIII

THE present and the past thou hast beheld:  
 It was a desolate sight. Now Spirit, learn,  
 The secrets of the future.—Time! Unfold the brooding pinion of thy gloom,  
 Render thou up thy half-devoured babes,  
 And from the cradles of eternity,  
 Where millions lie lulled to their portioned sleep  
 By the deep murmuring stream of passing things,  
 Tear thou that gloomy shroud.—Spirit, behold  
 Thy glorious destiny!

Joy to the Spirit came.  
 Through the wide rent in Time's eternal veil,  
 Hope was seen beaming through the mists of fear.  
 Earth was no longer hell;  
 Love, freedom, health, had given  
 Their ripeness to the manhood of its prime,  
 And all its pulses beat  
 Symphonious to the planetary spheres:

Then dulcet music swelled  
 Concordant with the life-strings of the soul;  
 It throbbed in sweet and languid beatings there,  
 Catching new life from transitory death.—  
 Like the vague sighings of a wind at even,  
 That wakes the wavelets of the slumbering sea,  
 And dies on the creation of its breath,  
 And sinks and rises, falls and swells by fits:  
 Was the pure stream of feeling  
 That sprang from these sweet notes,

And o'er the Spirit's human sympathies  
With mild and gentle motion calmly  
flowed.

Joy to the Spirit came,—  
Such joy as when a lover sees  
The chosen of his soul in happiness,  
And witnesses her peace  
Whose woe to him were bitterer than  
death;

Sees her unfaded cheek  
Glow mantling in first luxury  
of health,

Thrills with her lovely eyes,  
Which like two stars amid the heav-  
ing main

Sparkle through liquid bliss.  
Then in her triumph spoke the Fairy  
Queen:

Will not call the ghost of ages gone  
To unfold the frightful secrets of its  
lore;

The present now is past,  
And those events that desolate the  
earth

Have faded from the memory of Time,  
Who dares not give reality to that  
Whose being I annul. To me is  
given

The wonders of the human world to  
keep,

Space, matter, time, and mind.  
Futurity

Exposes now its treasure; let the  
sight

Renew and strengthen all thy failing  
hope.

O human Spirit! spur thee to the  
goal

Where virtue fixes universal peace,  
And, 'midst the ebb and flow of human  
things,

Show somewhat stable, somewhat  
certain still,

Light-house o'er the wild of dreary  
waves.

The habitable earth is full of bliss;  
Those wastes of frozen billows that  
were hurled

By everlasting snow-storms round the  
poles,

Where matter dared not vegetate nor  
live,

But ceaseless frost round the vast soli-  
tude

Bound its broad zone of stillness, are  
unloosed;

And fragrant zephyrs there from  
spicy isles

Ruffle the placid ocean-deep, that  
rolls

Its broad, bright surges to the sloping  
sand,

Whose roar is wakened into echoings  
sweet

To murmur through the heaven-  
breathing groves,

And melodise with man's blest nature  
there.

Those deserts of immeasurable sand,  
Whose age-collected fervours scarce  
allowed

A bird to live, a blade of grass to  
spring,

Where the shrill chirp of the green  
lizard's love

Broke on the sultry silentness alone,  
Now teem with countless rills and  
shady woods,

Corn-fields and pastures and white  
cottages;

And where the startled wilderness be-  
held

A savage conqueror stained in kindred  
blood,

A tigress sating with the flesh of  
lambs

The unnatural famine of her tooth-  
less cubs,

While shouts and howlings through  
the desert rang

Sloping and smooth the daisy-spang-  
led lawn,

Offering sweet incense to the sunrise,  
smiles

To see a babe before his mother's  
door,

Sharing his morning's meal  
With the green and golden

basilisk

That comes to lick his feet.

Those trackless deeps, where many a  
weary sail

Has seen above the illimitable plain,  
Morning on night, and night on morn-  
ing rise,

Whilst still no land to greet the wan-  
derer spread

Its shadowy mountains on the sun-  
bright sea,

Where the loud roarings of the tempest-waves  
 So long have mingled with the gusty wind  
 In melancholy loneliness, and swept  
 The desert of those ocean solitudes,  
 But vocal to the sea-bird's harrowing shriek,  
 The bellowing monster, and the rushing storm;  
 Now to the sweet and many mingling sounds  
 Of kindest human impulses respond.  
 Those lonely realms bright garden-isles begem,  
 With lightsome clouds and shining seas between,  
 And fertile valleys, resonant with bliss,  
 Whilst green woods overcanopy the wave,  
 Which like a toil-worn labourer leaps to shore,  
 To meet the kisses of the flowrets there.

All things are recreated, and the flame  
 Of consentaneous love inspires all life:  
 The fertile bosom of the earth gives suck  
 To myriads, who still grow beneath her care  
 Rewarding her with their pure perfectness:  
 The balmy breathings of the wind inhale  
 Her virtues, and diffuse them all abroad.  
 Health floats amid the gentle atmosphere,  
 Glows in the fruits, and mantles on the stream:  
 No storms deform the beaming brow of heaven,  
 Nor scatter in the freshness of its pride  
 The foliage of the ever-verdant trees;  
 But fruits are ever ripe, flowers ever fair,  
 And autumn proudly bears her matron grace,  
 Kindling a flush on the fair cheek of spring,  
 Whose virgin bloom beneath the ruddy fruit  
 Reflects its tint, and blushes into love.

The lion now forgets to thirst for blood:  
 There might you see him sporting in the sun  
 Beside the dreadless kid; his claws are sheathed,  
 His teeth are harmless, custom's force has made  
 His nature as the nature of a lamb.  
 Like passion's fruit, the nightshade's tempting bane  
 Poisons no more the pleasure it bestows:  
 All bitterness is past; the cup of joy  
 Unmingled mantles to the goblet's brim,  
 And courts the thirsty lips it fled before.

But chief, ambiguous man, he that can know  
 More misery, and dream more joy than all;  
 Whose keen sensations thrill within his breast  
 To mingle with a loftier instinct there,  
 Lending their power to pleasure and to pain,  
 Yet raising, sharpening, and refining each;  
 Who stands amid the ever-varying world,  
 The burthen or the glory of the earth;  
 He chief perceives the change; his being notes  
 The gradual renovation, and defines  
 Each movement of its progress on his mind.

Man, where the gloom of the long polar night  
 Lowers o'er the snow-clad rocks and frozen soil,  
 Where scarce the hardiest herb that braves the frost  
 Basks in the moonlight's ineffectual glow,  
 Shrank with the plants, and darkened with the night;  
 His chilled and narrow energies, his heart,  
 Insensible to courage, truth, or love,  
 His stunted stature and imbecile frame,  
 Marked him for some abortion of the earth,

Fit compeer of the bears that roamed  
 around,  
 Whose habits and enjoyments were  
 his own  
 His life a feverish dream of stagnant  
 woe,  
 Whose meagre wants, but scantily  
 fulfilled,  
 Apprised him ever of the joyless length  
 Which his short being's wretchedness  
 had reached ;  
 His death, a pang which famine, cold,  
 and toil,  
 Long on the mind, whilst yet the vital  
 spark  
 Lung to the body stubbornly, had  
 brought :  
 All was inflicted here that earth's  
 revenge  
 Could wreak on the infringers of her  
 law ;  
 One curse alone was spared—the  
 name of God.

Nor, where the tropics bound the  
 realms of day  
 With a broad belt of mingling cloud  
 and flame,  
 Where blue mists through the un-  
 moving atmosphere  
 Scattered the seeds of pestilence, and  
 fed  
 Unnatural vegetation, where the land  
 Teemed with all earthquake, tempest,  
 and disease,  
 Was man a nobler being ; slavery  
 Had crushed him to his country's  
 blood-stained dust ;  
 Or he was bartered for the fame of  
 power, [ing,  
 Which, all internal impulses destroy—  
 Makes human will an article of trade ;  
 Or he was changed with Christians  
 for their gold,  
 And dragged to distant isles, where to  
 the sound  
 Of the flesh-mangling scourge, he does  
 the work  
 Of all-polluting luxury and wealth,  
 Which doubly visits on the tyrants'  
 heads  
 The long-protracted fulgence of their  
 woe ;  
 Or he was led to legal butchery,  
 To turn to worms beneath that burn-  
 ing sun

Where kings first leagued against the  
 rights of men,  
 And priests first, traded with the  
 name of God.

Even where the milder zone afforded  
 man  
 A seeming shelter, yet contagion there,  
 Blighting his being with unnumbered  
 ills,  
 Spread like a quenchless fire ; nor  
 truth till late  
 Availd to arrest its progress, or cre-  
 ate  
 That peace which first in bloodless  
 victory waved  
 Her snowy standard o'er this favoured  
 clime :  
 There man was long the train-bearer  
 of slaves,  
 The mimic of surrounding misery,  
 The jackal of ambition's lion-rage,  
 The bloodhound of religion's hungry  
 zeal.

Here now the human being stands  
 adorning  
 This loveliest earth with taintless  
 body and mind ;  
 Blest from his birth with all bland im-  
 pulses,  
 Which gently in his noble bosom  
 wake  
 All kindly passions and all pure de-  
 sires.  
 Him (still from hope to hope the bliss  
 pursuing,  
 Which from the exhaustless store of  
 human weal  
 Draws on the virtuous mind) the  
 thoughts that rise  
 In time-destroying infiniteness, gift  
 With self-enshrined eternity, that  
 mocks  
 The unprevailing hoariness of age,  
 And man, once fleeting o'er the transi-  
 ent scene  
 Swift as an unremembered vision,  
 stands  
 Immortal upon earth ; no longer now  
 He slays the lamb that looks him in  
 the face,  
 And horribly devours his mangled  
 flesh ;  
 Which, still avenging nature's broken  
 law,

Kindled all putrid humours in his frame,  
 All evil passions, and all vain belief,  
 Hatred, despair, and loathing in his mind,  
 The germs of misery, death, disease, and crime.  
 No longer now the winged inhabitants  
 That in the woods their sweet lives sing away,  
 Flee from the form of man ; but gather round,  
 And prune their sunny feathers on the hands  
 Which little children stretch in friendly sport  
 Towards these dreadless partners of their play.  
 All things are void of terror : man has lost  
 His terrible prerogative, and stands  
 An equal amidst equals : happiness  
 And science dawn, though late, upon the earth ;  
 Peace cheers the mind, health renovates the frame ;  
 Disease and pleasure cease to mingle here,  
 Reason and passion cease to combat  
 Whilst each unfettered o'er the earth extends  
 Its all-subduing energies, and wields  
 The sceptre of a vast dominion there ;  
 Whilst every shape and mode of matter lends  
 Its force to the omnipotence of mind,  
 Which from its dark mine drags the gem of truth  
 To decorate its paradise of peace.

## IX

O HAPPY Earth ! reality of Heaven !  
 To which those restless souls that ceaselessly  
 Throng through the human universe, aspire ;  
 Thou consummation of all mortal hope !  
 Thou glorious prize of blindly-working will !  
 Whose rays, diffused throughout all space and time,  
 Verge to one point and blend for ever there :  
 Of purest spirits thou pure dwelling-place !

Where care and sorrow, impotence and crime,  
 Languor, disease, and ignorance, dare not come :  
 O happy Earth, reality of Heaven !  
 Genius has seen thee in her passionate dreams ;  
 And dim forebodings of thy loveliness,  
 Haunting the human heart, have there entwined  
 Those rooted hopes of some sweet place of bliss,  
 Where friends and lovers meet to part no more.  
 Thou art the end of all desire and will,  
 The product of all action ; and the souls  
 That by the paths of an aspiring change  
 Have reached thy haven of perpetual peace,  
 There rest from the eternity of toil  
 That framed the fabric of thy perfectness.  
 Even Time, the conqueror, fled thee in his fear ;  
 That hoary giant, who, in lonely pride,  
 So long had ruled the world, that nations fell  
 Beneath his silent footstep. Pyramids,  
 That for millenniums had withstood the tide  
 Of human things, his storm-breath drove in sand  
 Across that desert where their stones survived  
 The name of him whose pride had heaped them there.  
 Yon monarch, in his solitary pomp,  
 Was but the mushroom of a summer day,  
 That his light-winged footstep pressed to dust :  
 Time was the king of earth : all things gave way  
 Before him, but the fixed and virtuous will,  
 The sacred sympathies of soul and sense,  
 That mocked his fury and prepared his fall.  
 Yet slow and gradual dawned the morn of love ;

Long lay the clouds of darkness o'er  
the scene,  
Till from its native heaven they  
rolled away :  
First, crime triumphant o'er all hope  
careered  
Unblushing, undisguising, bold and  
strong ;  
Whilst falsehood, tricked in virtue's  
attributes,  
Long sanctified all deeds of vice and  
wqe,  
Till, done by her own venomous sting  
to death,  
She left the moral world without a law,  
No longer fettering passion's fearless  
wing.  
Then steadily the happy ferment  
worked ;  
Reason was free ; and wild though  
passion went  
Through tangled glens and wood-  
cmbosomed meads,  
Gathering a garland of the strangest  
flowers,  
Yet, like the bee returning to her  
queen, [brow,  
She bound the sweetest on her sister's  
Who, meek and sober, kissed the sport-  
ive child,  
No longer trembling at the broken rod.  
  
Mild was the slow necessity of death :  
The tranquil Spirit failed beneath its  
grasp.  
Without a groan, almost without a  
fear,  
Calm as a voyager to some distant  
land,  
And full of wonder, full of hope as he.  
The deadly germs of languor and dis-  
ease  
Died in the human frame, and purity  
Blessed with all gifts her earthly wor-  
shippers.  
How vigorous then the athletic form  
of age !  
How clear its open, and unwrinkled  
brow !  
Where neither avarice, cunning, pride,  
nor care,  
Had stamped the seal of grey deform-  
ity  
On all the mingling lineaments of time.  
How lovely the intrepid front of  
youth !

S.P.

Which meek-eyed courage decked  
with freshest grace ;  
Courage of soul, that dreaded not a  
name,  
And elevated will, that journeyed on  
Through life's phantasmal scene in  
fearlessness,  
With virtue, love, and pleasure, hand  
in hand.  
Then, that sweet bondage which is  
freedom's self,  
And rivets with sensation's softest tie  
The kindred sympathies of human  
souls,  
Needed no fetters of tyrannic law.  
Those delicate and timid impulses  
In nature's primal modesty arose,  
And with undoubting confidence dis-  
closed  
The growing longings of its dawning  
love,  
Unchecked by dull and selfish chast-  
ity,  
That virtue of the cheaply virtuous,  
Who pride themselves in senselessness  
and frost.  
No longer prostitution's venom'd  
bane  
Poisoned the springs of happiness and  
life ;  
Woman and man, in confidence and  
love,  
Equal and free and pure, together trod  
The mountain-paths of virtue, which  
no more  
Were stained with blood from many  
a pilgrim's feet.  
  
Then, where, through distant ages,  
long in pride  
The palace of the monarch-slave had  
mocked  
Famine's faint groan, and penury's  
silent tear,  
A heap of crumbling ruins stood, and  
threw  
Year after year their stones upon the  
field,  
Wakening a lonely echo ; and the  
leaves  
Of the old thorn, that on the topmost  
tower  
Usurped the royal ensign's grandeur,  
shook  
In the stern storm that swayed the  
topmost tower,

D



And whispered strange tales in the  
whirlwind's ear.

Low through the lone cathedral's roof-  
less aisles

The melancholy winds a death-dirge  
sung :

It were a sight of awfulness to see  
The works of faith and slavery, so vast,  
So sumptuous, yet so perishing with-  
al !

Even as the corpse that rests beneath  
its wall.

A thousand mourners decked the  
pomp of death

To-day, the breathing marble glows  
above

To decorate its memory, and tongues  
Are busy of its life : to-morrow, worms  
In silence and in darkness seize their  
prey.

Within the massy prison's moulder-  
ing courts,

Fearless and free the ruddy children  
played,

Weaving gay chaplets for their inno-  
cent brows

With the green ivy and the red wall-  
flower,

That mock the dungeon's unavailing  
gloom ;

The ponderous chains, and gratings  
of strong iron, [stone,

There rusted amid heaps of broken  
That mingled slowly with their native  
earth :

There the broad beam of day, which  
feebly once

Lighted the cheek of lean captivity  
With a pale and sickly glare, then  
freely shone

On the pure smiles of infant playfulness :

No more the shuddering voice of  
hoarse despair

Pealed through the echoing vaults, but  
soothing notes

Of ivy-fingered winds and gladsome  
birds

And merriment were resonant around.  
These ruins soon left not a wreck be-  
hind :

Their elements, wide scattered o'er the  
globe,

To happier shapes were moulded, and  
became

Ministrant to all blissful impulses :  
Thus human things were perfected,  
and earth,

Even as a child beneath its mother's  
love, -

Was strengthened in all excellence,  
and grew

Fairer and nobler with each passing  
year. [scene

Now Time his dusky pennons o'er the  
Closes in steadfast darkness, and the  
past

Fades from our charmed sight. My  
task is done :

Thy lore is learned. Earth's wonders  
are thine own,

With all the fear and all the hope  
they bring.

My spells are past : the present now  
recurs.

Ah me ! a pathless wilderness re-  
mains

Yet unsubdued by man's reclaiming  
hand.

Yet, human Spirit ! bravely hold thy  
course,

Let virtue teach thee firmly to pursue  
The gradual paths of an aspiring

change :  
For birth and life and death, and that  
strange state

Before the naked soul has found its  
home,

All tend to perfect happiness, and urge  
The restless wheels of being on their  
way,

Whose flashing spokes, instinct with  
infinite life,

Bicker and burn to gain their des-  
tined goal. [sense

For birth but wakes the spirit to the  
Of outward shows, whose unexper-  
ienced shape

New modes of passion to its frame  
may lend ;

Life is its state of action, and the store  
Of all events is aggregated there

That variegate the eternal universe ;  
Death is a gate of dreariness and  
gloom,

That leads to azure isles and beaming  
skies,

And happy regions of eternal hope,  
Therefore, O Spirit ! fearlessly bear  
on :

Though storms may break the prim-  
rose on its stalk,  
Though frosts may blight the fresh-  
ness of its bloom,  
Yet spring's awakening breath will  
woo the earth,  
To feed with kindest dews its fa-  
vourite flower,  
That blooms in mossy banks and  
darksome glens,  
Lighting the greenwood with its sunny  
smile.

Fear not then, Spirit, death's disrob-  
bing hand ;  
So welcome when the tyrant is awake,  
So welcome when the bigot's hell-  
torch burns ;  
'Tis but the voyage of a darksome  
hour,  
The transient gulf-dream of a startling  
sleep.  
Death is no foe to virtue : earth has  
seen  
Love's brightest roses on the scaffold  
bloom,  
Mingling with freedom's fadeless lau-  
rels there,  
And presaging the truth of visioned  
bliss.  
Are there not hopes within thee,  
which this scene  
Of linked and gradual being has con-  
firmed,  
Whose stings bade thy heart look  
further still,  
When to the moonlight walk, by  
Henry led,  
Sweetly and sadly thou didst talk of  
death ?  
And wilt thou rudely tear them from  
thy breast,  
Listening supinely to a bigot's creed,  
Or tamely crouching to the tyrant's  
rod,  
Whose iron thongs are red with hu-  
man gore ?  
Never : but bravely bearing on, thy  
will  
Is destined an eternal war to wage  
With tyranny and falsehood, and up-  
root  
The germs of misery from the human  
heart.  
Thine is the hand whose piety would  
soothe

The thorny pillow of unhappy crime,  
Whose impotence an easy pardon  
gains,  
Watching its wanderings as a friend's  
disease :  
Thine is the brow whose mildness  
would defy  
Its fiercest rage, and brave its stern-  
est will,  
When fenced by power and master of  
the world.  
Thou art sincere and good ; of reso-  
lute mind,  
Free from heart-withering custom's  
cold control,  
Of passion lofty, pure and unsubdued.  
Earth's pride and meanness could not  
vanquish thee,  
And therefore art thou worthy of the  
boon  
Which thou hast now received : virtue  
shall keep  
Thy footsteps in the path that thou  
hast trod,  
And many days of beaming hope shall  
bless  
Thy spotless life of sweet and sacred  
love.  
Go, happy one ! and give that bosom  
joy,  
Whose sleepless spirit waits to catch  
Light, life and rapture from thy  
smile.

The Fairy waves her wand of  
charm.  
Speechless with bliss the Spirit mounts  
the car,  
That rolled beside the battlement,  
Bending her beamy eyes in thankful-  
ness.  
Again the enchanted steeds were  
yoked,  
Again the burning wheels inflame  
The steep descent of heaven's untrod-  
den way.  
Fast and far the chariot flew :  
The vast and fiery globes that rolled  
Around the Fairy's palace-gate  
Lessened by slow degrees, and soon  
appeared  
Such tiny twinklers as the planet orbs  
That there attendant on the solar  
power  
With borrowed light pursued their  
narrower way.

Earth floated then below : The chariot paused a moment there ; The Spirit then descended : The restless coursers pawed the un- genial soil, Snuffed the gross air, and then, their errand done, [heaven, Unfurled their pinions to the winds of The Body and the Soul united then ; A gentle start convulsed Ianthe's frame ;	Her veiny eyelids quietly unclosed ; Moveless awhile the dark blue orbs remained : She looked around in wonder, and be- held Henry, who kneeled in silence by her couch, Watching her sleep with looks of speechless love, And the bright beaming stars That through the casement shone.
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## ALASTOR: OR, THE SPIRIT OF SOLITUDE

Nondum amabam, et amare amabam, quærebam quid amarem amans amare.

*Confess. St. August.*

### PREFACE

THE poem entitled "Alastor," may be considered as allegorical of one of the most interesting situations of the human mind. It represents a youth of uncorrupted feelings and adventurous genius, led forth by an imagination inflamed and purified through familiarity with all that is excellent and majestic, to the contemplation of the universe. He drinks deep of the fountains of knowledge, and is still insatiate. The magnificence and beauty of the external world sinks profoundly into the frame of his conceptions, and affords to their modifications a variety not to be exhausted. So long as it is possible for his desire to point towards objects thus infinite and unmeasured, he is joyous, and tranquil, and self-possessed. But the period arrives when these objects cease to suffice. His mind is at length suddenly awakened, and thirsts for intercourse with an intelligence similar to itself. He images to himself the Being whom he loves. Conversant with speculations of the sublimest and most perfect nature, the vision in which he embodies his own imaginations, unites all of wonderful, or wise, or beautiful, which the poet, the philosopher, or the lover could depicture. The intellectual faculties, the imagination, the func-

tions of sense, have their respective requisitions on the sympathy of corresponding powers in other human beings. The Poet is represented as uniting these requisitions, and attaching them to a single image. He seeks in vain for a prototype of his conception. Blasted by his disappointment, he descends to an untimely grave.

The picture is not barren of instruction to actual men. The Poet's self-centred seclusion was avenged by the furies of an irresistible passion pursuing him to speedy ruin. But that Power which strikes the luminaries of the world with sudden darkness and extinction, by awakening them to too exquisite a perception of its influences, dooms to a slow and poisonous decay those meaner spirits that dare to abjure its dominion. Their destiny is more abject and inglorious, as their delinquency is more contemptible and pernicious. They who, deluded by no generous error, instigated by no sacred thirst of doubtful knowledge, duped by no illustrious superstition, loving nothing on this earth, and cherishing no hopes beyond, yet keep aloof from sympathies with their kind, rejoicing neither in human joy nor mourning with human grief ; these, and such as they, have their apportioned curse. They languish, because none feel

with them their common nature. They are morally dead. They are neither friends, nor lovers, nor fathers, nor citizens of the world, nor benefactors, of their country. Among those who attempt to exist without human sympathy, the pure and tender-hearted perish through the intensity and passion of their search after its communities, when the vacancy of their spirit suddenly makes itself felt. All else, selfish, blind, and torpid, are those unforeseeing multitudes who constitute, together with their own, the lasting misery and loneliness of the world. Those who love not their fellow-beings, live unfruitful lives, and prepare for their old age a miserable grave.

The good die first,  
And those whose hearts are dry as summer's dust  
Burn to the socket!

*December 14, 1815.*

EARTH, ocean, air, beloved brotherhood!

If our great mother have imbued my soul

With aught of natural piety to feel  
Your love, and recompense the boon  
with mine;

If dewy morn, and odorous noon, and even,

With sunset and its gorgeous ministers,

And solemn midnight's tingling silent-ness;

If autumn's hollow sighs in the sere wood,

And winter robing with pure snow  
and crowns

Of starry ice the grey grass and bare boughs;

If spring's voluptuous pantings when  
she breathes

Her first sweet kisses, have been dear  
to me;

If no bright bird, insect, or gentle  
beast

I consciously have injured, but still  
loved

And cherished these my kindred;—  
then forgive

This boast, beloved brethren, and  
withdraw

No portion of your wonted favour  
now!

Mother of this unfathomable world!  
Favour my solemn song, for I have  
loved

Thee ever, and thee only; I have  
watched

Thy shadow, and the darkness of thy  
steps,

And my heart ever gazes on the  
depth

Of thy deep mysteries. I have made  
my bed

In charnels and on coffins, where black  
death

Keeps record of the trophies won from  
thee.

Hoping to still these obstinate ques-  
tionings

Of thee and thine, by forcing some lone  
ghost,

Thy messenger, to render up the tale  
Of what we are. In lone and silent  
hours,

When night makes a weird sound of  
its own stillness,

Like an inspired and desperate  
alchemist

Staking his very life on some dark  
hope,

Have I mixed awful talk and asking  
looks

With my most innocent love, until  
strange tears,

Uniting with those breathless kisses,  
made

Such magic as compels the charmed  
night

To render up thy charge: and, though  
ne'er yet

Thou hast unveiled thy inmost sanc-  
tuary;

Enough from incommunicable dream,  
And twilight phantasms, and deep

noonday thought,  
Has shone within me, that serenely  
now

And moveless, as a long-forgotten lyre  
Suspended in the solitary dome

Of some mysterious and deserted fane,  
I wait thy breath, Great Parent, that

my strain

May modulate with murmurs of the  
air,

And motions of the forests and the sea,

And voice of living beings, and woven  
hymns  
Of night and day, and the deep heart  
of man.

There was a Poet whose untimely  
tomb  
No human hands with pious reverence  
reared,  
But the charmed eddies of autumnal  
winds  
Built o'er his mouldering bones a  
pyramid  
Of mouldering leaves in the waste  
wilderness;  
A lovely youth,—no mourning maiden  
decked  
With weeping flowers, or votive cy-  
press wreath,  
The lone couch of his everlasting sleep:  
Gentle, and brave, and generous, no  
lorn bard  
Breathed o'er his dark fate one melo-  
dious sigh:  
He lived, he died, he sang in solitude.  
Strangers have wept to hear his pas-  
sionate notes,  
And virgins, as unknown he passed,  
have pined  
And wasted for fond love of his wild  
eyes.  
The fire of those soft orbs has ceased  
to burn,  
And Silence too, enamoured of that  
voice,  
Locks its mute music in her rugged  
cell.

By solemn vision and bright silver  
dream,  
His infancy was nurtured. Every  
sight  
And sound from the vast earth and  
ambient air  
Sent to his heart its choicest impulses.  
The fountains of divine philosophy  
Fled not his thirsting lips: and all  
of great,  
Or good, or lovely, which the sacred  
past  
In truth or fable consecrates, he felt  
And knew. When early youth had  
past, he left  
His cold fireside and alienated home,  
To seek strange truths in undiscovered  
lands.

Many a wide waste and tangled wil-  
derness  
Has lured his fearless steps; and he  
has bought  
With his sweet voice and eyes, from  
savage men,  
His rest and food. Nature's most  
secret steps  
He, like her shadow, has pursued,  
where'er  
The red volcano overcanopies  
Its fields of snow and pinnacles of ice  
With burning smoke: or where bitu-  
men lakes,  
On black bare pointed islets ever beat  
With sluggish surge, or where the se-  
cret caves,  
Rugged and dark, winding among the  
springs,  
Of fire and poison, inaccessible  
To avarice or pride, their starry domes  
Of diamond and of gold expand above  
Numberless and immeasurable halls,  
Frequent with crystal column, and  
clear shrines  
Of pearl, and thrones radiant with  
chrysolite.  
Nor had that scene of ampler majesty  
Than gems of gold, the varying roof  
of heaven  
And the green earth, lost in his heart  
its claims  
To love and wonder; he would linger  
long  
In lonesome vales making the wild his  
home,  
Until the doves and squirrels would  
partake  
From his innocuous hand his blood-  
less food,  
Lured by the gentle meaning of his  
looks,  
And the wild antelope, that starts  
whene'er  
The dry leaf rustles in the brake, sus-  
pend  
Her timid steps, to gaze upon a form  
More graceful than her own.  
His wandering step,  
Obedient to high thoughts has visited  
The awful ruins of the days of old:  
Athens, and Tyre, and Balbec, and the  
waste  
Where stood Jerusalem, the fallen  
towers  
Of Babylon, the eternal pyramids,

Memphis and Thebes, and whatsoe'er  
 of strange  
 Sculptured on alabaster obelisk,  
 Or jasper tomb, or mutilated sphynx,  
 Dark Ethiopia on her desert hills  
 Conceals. Among the ruined temples  
 there,  
 Stupendous columns, and wild images  
 Of more than man, where marble dem-  
 mons watch  
 The Zodiac's brazen mystery, and  
 dead men  
 Hang their mute thoughts on the  
 mute walls around,  
 He lingered, poring on memorials  
 Of the world's youth, through the  
 long burning day  
 Gazed on those speechless shapes, nor,  
 when the moon  
 Filled the mysterious halls with float-  
 ing shades  
 Suspended he that task, but ever  
 gazed  
 And gazed, till meaning on his vacant  
 mind  
 Flashed like strong inspiration, and  
 he saw  
 The thrilling secrets of the birth of  
 time.

Meanwhile an Arab maiden brought  
 his food,  
 Her daily portion, from her father's  
 tent,  
 And spread her matting for his couch,  
 and stole  
 From duties and repose to tend his  
 steps :  
 Enamoured, yet not daring for deep  
 awe  
 To speak her love :—and watched  
 his nightly sleep,  
 Sleepless herself, to gaze upon his lips  
 Parted in slumber, whence the regular  
 breath  
 Of innocent dreams arose : then,  
 when red morn  
 Made paler the pale moon, to her cold  
 home,  
 Wildered, and wan, and panting, she  
 returned.

The Poet wandering on, through  
 Arabic  
 And Persia, and the wild Carmanian  
 waste,

And o'er the aërial mountains which  
 pour down  
 Indus and Oxus from their icy caves,  
 In joy and exultation held his way ;  
 Till in the vale of Cachmire, far with-  
 in  
 Its loneliest dell, where odorous plants  
 entwine  
 Beneath the hollow rocks a natural  
 bower,  
 Beside a sparkling rivulet he stretched  
 His languid limbs. A vision on his  
 sleep  
 There came, a dream of hopes that  
 never yet  
 Had flushed his cheek. He dreamed  
 a veiled maid  
 Sate near him, talking in low solemn  
 tones.  
 Her voice was like the voice of his own  
 soul  
 Heard in the calm of thought ; its  
 music long,  
 Like woven sounds of streams and  
 breezes, held  
 His inmost sense suspended in its web  
 Of many-coloured woof and shifting  
 hues.  
 Knowledge and truth and virtue  
 were her theme,  
 And lofty hopes of divine liberty,  
 Thoughts the most dear to him, and  
 poesy,  
 Himself a poet. Soon the solemn  
 mood  
 Of her pure mind kindled through all  
 her frame  
 A permeating fire ; wild numbers then  
 She raised, with voice stifled in tre-  
 mulous sobs  
 Subdued by its own pathos : her fair  
 hands  
 Were bare alone, sweeping from some  
 strange harp  
 Strange symphony, and in their  
 branching veins  
 The eloquent blood told an ineffable  
 tale.  
 The beating of her heart was heard to  
 fill  
 The pauses of her music, and her  
 breath  
 Tumultuously accorded with those  
 fits  
 Of intermitted song. Suddenly she rose,  
 As if her heart impatiently endured

Its bursting burthen : at the sound  
 he turned,  
 And saw by the warm light of their  
 own life  
 Her glowing limbs beneath the sinu-  
 ous veil  
 Of woven wind ; her outspread arms  
 now bare,  
 Her dark locks floating in the breath  
 of night,  
 Her beamy bending eyes, her parted  
 lips  
 Outstretched, and pale, and quivering  
 eagerly.  
 His strong heart sank and sickened  
 with excess  
 Of love. He reared his shuddering  
 limbs, and quelled  
 His gasping breath, and spread his  
 arms to meet  
 Her panting bosom :—she drew back  
 awhile,  
 Then, yielding to the irresistible joy,  
 With frantic gesture and short breath-  
 less cry [arms.  
 Folded his frame in her dissolving  
 Now blackness veiled his dizzy eyes,  
 and night  
 Involved and swallowed up the  
 vision ; sleep,  
 Like a dark flood suspended in its  
 course,  
 Rolled back its impulse on his vacant  
 brain.

Roused by the shock, he started  
 from his trance—  
 The cold white light of morning, the  
 blue moon  
 Low in the west, the clear and garish  
 hills,  
 The distinct valley and the vacant  
 woods,  
 Spread round him where he stood.  
 Whither have fled  
 The hues of heaven that canopied his  
 bower  
 Of yesternight ? The sounds that  
 soothed his sleep,  
 The mystery and the majesty of  
 Earth,  
 The joy, the exultation ? His wan  
 eyes  
 Gaze on the empty scene as vacantly  
 As ocean's moon looks on the moon in  
 heaven.

The spirit of sweet human love has  
 sent  
 A vision to the sleep of him who  
 spurned  
 Her choicest gifts. He eagerly pur-  
 sues  
 Beyond the realms of dream that fleet-  
 ing shade ;  
 He overleaps the bounds. Alas !  
 alas !  
 Were limbs and breath and being  
 intertwined  
 Thus treacherously ? Lost, lost, for  
 ever lost  
 In the wide pathless desert of dim  
 sleep,  
 That beautiful shape ! Does the dark  
 gate of death  
 Conduct to thy mysterious paradise,  
 O Sleep ? Does the bright arch of  
 rainbow clouds,  
 And pendent mountains seen in the  
 calm lake,  
 Lead only to a black and watery  
 depth,  
 While death's blue vault with loath-  
 liest vapours hung,  
 Where every shade which the foul  
 grave exhales  
 Hides its dead eye from the detested  
 day, [realms ?  
 Conduct, O Sleep, to thy delightful  
 This doubt with sudden tide flowed on  
 his heart,  
 The insatiate hope which it awakened,  
 stung  
 His brain even like despair.  
 While daylight held  
 The sky, the Poet kept mute confer-  
 ence  
 With his still soul. At night the pas-  
 sion came,  
 Like the fierce fiend of a distempered  
 dream,  
 And shook him from his rest, and led  
 him forth  
 Into the darkness.—As an eagle  
 grasped  
 In folds of the green serpent, feels her  
 breast  
 Burn with the poison, and precipi-  
 tates  
 Through night and day, tempest, and  
 calm and cloud,  
 Frantic with dizzying anguish, her  
 blind flight

O'er the wide æry wilderness: thus driven  
 By the bright shadow of that lovely dream,  
 Beneath the cold glare of the desolate night,  
 Through tangled swamps and deep precipitous dells,  
 Startling with careless step the moonlight snake,  
 He fled. Red morning dawned upon his night,  
 Shedding the mockery of its vital hues  
 Upon his cheek of death. He wandered on,  
 Till vast Aornos, seen from Petra's steep,  
 Hung o'er the low horizon like a cloud;  
 Through Balk, and where the desolated tombs  
 Of Parthian kings scatter to every wind  
 Their wasting dust, wildly he wandered on,  
 Day after day, a weary waste of hours,  
 Bearing within his life the brooding care  
 That ever fed on its decaying flame.  
 And now his limbs were lean; his scattered hair  
 Sered by the autumn of strange suffering,  
 Sung dirges in the wind; his listless hand  
 Hung like dead bone within its withered skin;  
 Life, and the lustre that consumed it, shone  
 As in a furnace burning secretly  
 From his dark eyes alone. The cottagers,  
 Who ministered with human charity  
 His human wants, beheld with wondering awe  
 Their fleeting visitant. The mountaineer,  
 Encountering on some dizzy precipice  
 That spectral form, deemed that the Spirit of wind  
 With lightning eyes, and eager breath, and feet  
 Disturbing not the drifted snow, had paused  
 In his career; the infant would conceal

His troubled visage in his mother's robe  
 In terror at the glare of those wild eyes,  
 To remember their strange light in many a dream  
 Of after times; but youthful maidens, taught  
 By nature, would interpret half the woe  
 That wasted him, would call him with false names  
 Brother, and friend, would press his pallid hand  
 At parting, and watch, dim through tears, the path  
 Of his departure from their father's door.

At length upon the lone Chorasman shore  
 He paused, a wide and melancholy waste  
 Of putrid marshes. A strong impulse urged  
 His steps to the sea-shore. A swan was there,  
 Beside a sluggish stream among the reeds.  
 It rose as he approached, and with strong wings  
 Scaling the upward sky, bent its bright course  
 High over the immeasurable main.  
 His eyes pursued its flight—"Thou hast a home,  
 Beautiful bird! thou voyagest to thine home,  
 Where thy sweet mate will twine her downy neck  
 With thine, and welcome thy return with eyes  
 Bright in the lustre of their own fond joy.  
 And what am I that I should linger here,  
 With voice far sweeter than thy dying notes,  
 Spirit more vast than thine, frame more attuned  
 To beauty, wasting these surpassing powers  
 In the deaf air, to the blind earth, and heaven  
 That echoes not my thoughts?" A gloomy smile



Of desperate hope wrinkled his  
quivering lips.  
For sleep, he knew, kept most relent-  
lessly  
Its precious charge, and silent death  
exposed,  
Faithless perhaps as sleep, a shadowy  
lure,  
With doubtful smile mocking its own  
strange charms.

Startled by his own thoughts, he  
looked around :  
There was no fair fiend near him, not  
a sight  
Or sound of awe but in his own deep  
mind.  
A little shallop floating near the shore  
Caught the impatient wandering of  
his gaze.  
It had been long abandoned, for its  
sides  
Gaped wide with many a rift, and its  
frail joints  
Swayed with the undulations of the  
tide.  
A restless impulse urged him to em-  
bark  
And meet lone Death on the drear  
ocean's waste ;  
For well he knew that mighty Shadow  
loves  
The slimy caverns of the populous  
deep.

The day was fair and sunny : sea  
and sky  
Drank its inspiring radiance, and the  
wind  
Swept strongly from the shore, black-  
ening the waves.  
Following his eager soul, the wanderer  
Leapt in the boat, he spread his cloak  
aloft  
On the bare mast, and took his lonely  
seat,  
And felt the boat speed o'er the tran-  
quil sea  
Like a torn cloud before the hurricane.

As one that in a silver vision  
floats  
Obedient to the sweep of odorous  
winds  
Upon resplendent clouds, so rapidly  
Along the dark and ruffled waters fled

The straining boat. A whirlwind  
swept it on,  
With fierce gusts and precipitating  
force,  
Through the white ridges of the chafed  
sea.  
The waves arose. Higher and higher  
still  
Their fierce necks writhed beneath the  
tempest's scourge  
Like serpents struggling in a vulture's  
grasp.  
Calm and rejoicing in the fearful war  
Of wave running on wave, and blast on  
blast  
Descending, and black flood on whirl-  
pool driven  
With dark obliterating course, he sate :  
As if their genii were the ministers  
Appointed to conduct him to the  
light  
Of those beloved eyes, the Poet sate  
Holding the steady helm. Evening  
came on,  
The beams of sunset hung their rain-  
bow hues  
High mid the shifting domes of  
sheeted spray  
That canopied his path o'er the waste  
deep ;  
Twilight, ascending slowly from the  
east,  
Entwined in duskier wreaths her  
braided locks  
O'er the fair front and radiant eyes of  
day ;  
Night followed, clad with stars.  
On every side  
More horribly the multitudinous  
streams  
Of ocean's mountainous waste to  
mutual war  
Rush'd in dark tumult thundering, as  
to mock  
The calm and spangled sky. The  
little boat  
Still fled before the storm ; still fled,  
like foam  
Down the steep cataract of a wintry  
river ;  
Now pausing on the edge of the riven  
wave ;  
Now leaving far behind the bursting  
mass  
That fell, convulsing ocean. Safely  
fled—

As if that frail and wasted human  
 form  
 Had been an elemental god.  
 At midnight  
 The moon arose: and lo! the ether-  
 eal cliffs  
 Of Caucasus, whose icy summits shone  
 Among the stars like sunlight, and  
 around  
 Whose caverned base the whirlpools  
 and the waves,  
 Bursting and eddying irresistibly,  
 Rage and resound for ever.—Who  
 shall save?—  
 The boat fled on,—the boiling torrent  
 drove,—  
 The crags closed round with black  
 and jagged arms,  
 The shattered mountain overhung  
 the sea,  
 And faster still, beyond all human  
 speed,  
 Suspended on the sweep of the smooth  
 wave,  
 The little boat was driven. A cavern  
 there  
 Yawned, and amid its slant and wind-  
 ing depths  
 •  
 Ingulphed the rushing sea. The  
 boat fled on  
 With unrelaxing speed. “Vision and  
 Love!”  
 The Poet cried aloud, “I have beheld  
 The path of thy departure. Sleep and  
 death  
 Shall not divide us long.”  
 The boat pursued  
 The windings of the cavern. Day-  
 light shone  
 •  
 At length upon that gloomy river's  
 flow:  
 Now, where the fiercest war among  
 the waves  
 Is calm, on the unfathomable stream  
 The boat moved slowly. Where the  
 •  
 mountain, riven,  
 Exposed those black depths to the  
 azure sky,  
 •  
 Ere yet the flood's enormous volume  
 fell  
 Even to the base of Caucasus, with  
 sound  
 •  
 That shook the everlasting rocks, the  
 mass  
 Filled with one whirlpool all that  
 ample chasm;  
 Stair above stair the eddying waters  
 rose,  
 Circling immeasurably fast, and laved  
 With alternating dash the gnarled  
 roots  
 Of mighty trees, that stretched their  
 giant arms  
 In darkness over it. I' the midst was  
 left,  
 Reflecting, yet distorting every cloud,  
 A pool of treacherous and tremend-  
 ous calm,  
 Seized by the sway of the ascending  
 stream,  
 With dizzy swiftness, round, and  
 round, and round,  
 Ridge after ridge the straining boat  
 arose,  
 Till on the verge of the extremest  
 curve,  
 Where, through an opening of the  
 rocky bank,  
 The waters overflow, and a smooth  
 spot  
 Of glassy quiet 'mid those battling  
 tides  
 Is left, the boat pause shuddering.  
 Shall it sink  
 Down the abyss? Shall the revert-  
 ing stress  
 Of that resistless gulf embosom it?  
 Now shall it fall? A wandering  
 stream of wind,  
 Breathed from the west, has caught  
 the expanded sail,  
 And, lo! with gentle motion between  
 banks  
 Of mossy slope, and on a placid  
 stream,  
 [hark!  
 Beneath a woven grove, it sails, and,  
 The ghastly torrent mingles its far  
 roar,  
 With the breeze murmuring in the  
 musical woods.  
 Where the embowering trees recede,  
 and leave  
 A little space of green expanse, the  
 cove  
 Is closed by meeting banks, whose  
 •  
 yellow flowers  
 For ever gaze on their own drooping  
 eyes,  
 Reflected in the crystal calm. The  
 wave  
 Of the boat's motion marred their  
 pensive task,

Which nought but vagrant bird, or  
 wanton wind,  
 Or falling spear-glass, or their own  
 decay  
 Had e'er disturbed before. The Poet  
 longed  
 To deck with their bright hues his  
 withered hair,  
 But on his heart its solitude returned,  
 And he forbore. Not the strong im-  
 pulse hid  
 In those flushed cheeks, bent eyes,  
 and shadowy frame  
 Had yet performed its ministry: it  
 hung  
 Upon his life, as lightning in a cloud  
 Gleams, hovering ere it vanish, ere the  
 floods  
 Of night close over it.  
 The noonday sun  
 Now shone upon the forest, one vast  
 mass  
 Of mingling shade, whose brown mag-  
 nificence  
 A narrow vale embosoms. There,  
 huge caves,  
 Scooped in the dark base of those  
 æry rocks  
 Mocking its moans, respond and roar  
 for ever.  
 The meeting boughs and implicated  
 leaves led  
 Wove twilight o'er the Poet's path, as  
 By love, or dream, or god, or mightier  
 Death,  
 He sought in Nature's dearest haunt,  
 some bank,  
 Her cradle, and his sepulchre. More  
 dark  
 And dark the shades accumulate—  
 the oak,  
 Expanding its immense and knotty  
 arms,  
 Embraces the light beech. The  
 pyramids  
 Of the tall cedar overarching, frame  
 Most solemn domes within, and far  
 below,  
 Like clouds suspended in an emerald  
 sky,  
 The ash and the acacia floating hang  
 Tremulous and pale. Like restless  
 serpents, clothed  
 In rainbow and in fire, the parasites,  
 Starr'd with ten thousand blossoms,  
 flow around  
 The grey trunks, and, as gamesome  
 infants' eyes,  
 With gentle meanings, and most inno-  
 cent wiles,  
 Fold their beams round the hearts of  
 those that love,  
 These twine their tendrils with the  
 wedded boughs  
 Uniting their close union; the woven  
 leaves  
 Make network of the dark blue light  
 of day,  
 And the night's noontide clearness,  
 mutable  
 As shapes in the weird clouds. Soft  
 mossy lawns  
 Beneath these canopies extend their  
 swells,  
 Fragrant with perfumed herbs, and  
 eyed with blooms  
 Minute, yet beautiful. One darkest  
 glen  
 Sends from its woods of musk-rose,  
 twined with jasmine,  
 A soul-dissolving odour, to invite  
 To some more lovely mystery.  
 Through the dell,  
 Silence and Twilight here, twin sis-  
 ters, keep  
 Their noonday watch, and sail among  
 the shades,  
 Like vaporous shapes half-seen; be-  
 yond, a well,  
 Dark, gleaming, and of most trans-  
 lucent wave,  
 Images all the woven boughs above,  
 And each depending leaf, and every  
 speck  
 Of azure sky, darting between their  
 chasms;  
 Nor aught else in the liquid mirror  
 laves [star  
 Its portraiture, but some inconstant  
 Between one foliated lattice twink-  
 ling fair,  
 Or painted bird, sleeping beneath the  
 moon,  
 Or gorgeous insect, floating motion-  
 less,  
 Unconscious of the day, ere yet his  
 wings  
 Have spread their glories to the gaze  
 of noon.  
 Hither the Poet came. His eyes  
 beheld

Their own wan light through the  
reflected lines

Of his thin hair, distinct in the dark  
depth

Of that still fountain ; as the human  
heart,

Gazing in dreams over the gloomy  
grave,

Sees its own treacherous likeness  
there. He heard

The motion of the leaves, the grass  
that sprung

Startled and glanced and trembled  
even to feel

An unaccustomed presence, and the  
sound

Of the sweet brook that from the  
secret springs

Of that dark fountain rose. A Spirit  
seemed

To stand beside him—clothed in no  
bright robes

Of shadowy silver or enshrining light,  
Borrow'd from aught the visible  
world affords

Of grace, or majesty, or mystery ;—  
But undulating woods, and silent

well,  
And rippling rivulet, and evening  
gloom

Now deepening the dark shades, for  
speech assuming

Held commune with him, as if he and  
it

Were all that was,—only—when his  
regard

Was raised by intense pensiveness,—  
two eyes,

Two starry eyes, hung in the gloom  
of thought,

And seemed with their serene and  
azure smiles

To beckon him.

Obedient to the light  
That shone within his soul, he went,  
pursuing

The windings of the dell.—The rivu-  
let

Wanton and wild, through many a  
green ravine

Beneath the forest flowed. Some-  
times it fell

Among the moss, with hollow har-  
mony

Dark and profound. Now on the  
polished stones

It danced ; like childhood laughing as  
it went :

Then, through the plain in tranquil  
wanderings crept,

Reflecting every herb and drooping  
bud

That overhung its quietness.—“ O  
stream !

Whose source is inaccessible pro-  
found,

Whither do thy mysterious waters  
tend ?

Thou imagest my life. Thy dark-  
some stillness,

Thy dazzling waves, thy loud and  
hollow gulfs, [course

Thy searchless fountain, and invisible  
Have each their type in me : And the

wide sky,  
And measureless ocean may declare

as soon  
What oozy cavern or what wander-  
ing cloud

Contains thy waters, as the universe  
Tell where these living thoughts re-  
side, when stretched

Upon thy flowers my bloodless limbs  
shall waste

I' the passing wind ! ”

Beside the grassy shore  
Of the small stream he went ; he did  
impress

On the green moss his tremulous step,  
that caught

Strong shuddering from his burning  
limbs. As one

Roused by some joyous madness  
from the couch

Of fever, he did move ; yet, not like  
him,

Forgetful of the grave, where, when  
the flame

Of his frail exultation shall be spent,  
He must descend. With rapid steps

he went  
Beneath the shade of trees, beside the

flow  
Of the wild babbling rivulet ; and now

The forest's solemn canopies were  
changed

For the uniform and lightsome even-  
ing sky.

Grey rocks did peep from the spare  
moss, and stemmed

The struggling brook : tall spires of  
windlestrae

<p>             Threw their thin shadows down the              rugged slope,              And nought but gnarled roots of              ancient pines              Branchless and blasted, clenched              with grasping roots              The unwilling soil. A gradual change              was here,              Yet ghastly. For, as fast years flow              away,              The smooth brow gathers, and the              hair grows thin              And white; and where irradiate              dewy eyes              Had shone, gleam stony orbs: so              from his steps              Bright flowers departed, and the beau-              tiful shade              Of the green groves, with all their              odorous winds              And musical motions. Calm, he still              pursued              The stream, that with a larger volume              now              Rolled through the labyrinthine dell;              and there              Fretted a path through its descend-              ing curves              With its wintry speed. On every side              now rose              Rocks, which, in unimaginable forms,              Lifted their black and barren pin-              nacles              In the light of evening, and its preci-              pice              Obscuring the ravine, disclosed above,              'Mid toppling stones, black gulfs,              and yawning caves,              Whose windings gave ten thousand              various tongues              To the loud stream. Lo! where the              pass expands              Its stony jaws, the abrupt mountain              breaks,              And seems, with its accumulated              crags,              To overhang the world: for wide ex-              pand              Beneath the wan stars and descend-              ing moon.              Islanded seas, blue mountains, mighty              streams,              Dim tracks and vast, robed in the lus-              trous gloom              Of leaden-coloured even, and fiery              hills           </p>	<p>             Mingling their flames with twilight, on              the verge              Of the remote horizon. The neat              scene,              In naked and severe simplicity,              Made contrast with the universe. A              pine,              Rock-rooted, stretched athwart the              vacancy              Its swinging boughs, to each incon-              stant blast              Yielding one only response, at each              pause,              In most familiar cadence, with the              howl              The thunder and the hiss of homeless              streams              Mingling its solemn song, whilst the              broad river,              Foaming and hurrying o'er its rugged              path,              Fell into that immeasurable void,              Scattering its waters to the passing              winds.                Yet the grey precipice, and solemn              pine              And torrent, were not all;—one silent              nook              Was there. Even on the edge of that              vast mountain,              Upheld by knotty roots and fallen              rocks,              It overlooked in its serenity              The dark earth, and the bending              vault of stars.              It was a tranquil spot, that seemed to              smile              Even in the lap of horror, Ivy              clasped              The fissured stones with its entwining              arms,              And did embower with leaves forever              green,              And berries dark, the smooth and              even space              Of its inviolated floor, and here              The children of the autumnal whirl-              wind bore,              In wanton sport, those bright leaves,              whose decay,              Red, yellow, or ethereally pale,              Rival the pride of summer. 'Tis the              haunt              Of every gentle wind, whose breath              can teach           </p>
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The wilds to love tranquillity. One  
 step,  
 One human step along, has ever  
 broken  
 The stillness of its solitude :—one  
 voice.  
 Alone inspired its echoes ;—even that  
 voice  
 Which hither came, floating among  
 the winds,  
 And led the loveliest among human  
 forms  
 To make their wild haunts the deposi-  
 tory  
 Of all the grace and beauty that en-  
 dued  
 Its motions, render up its majesty,  
 Scatter its music on the unfeeling  
 storm,  
 And to the damp leaves and blue  
 cavern mould,  
 Nurses of rainbow flowers and branch-  
 ing moss,  
 Commit the colours of that varying  
 cheek,  
 That snowy breast, those dark and  
 drooping eyes.

• The dim and horned moon hung  
 low, and poured  
 A sea of lustre on the horizon's verge  
 That overflowed its mountains. Yel-  
 low mist  
 Filled the unbounded atmosphere,  
 and drank  
 Wan moonlight even to fulness : not  
 a star  
 Shone, not a sound was heard ; the  
 very winds,  
 Danger's grim playmates, on that  
 precipice  
 Slept, clasped in his embrace. —O,  
 storm of death !  
 Whose sightless speed divides this  
 sullen night :  
 And thou, colossal Skeleton, that, still  
 Guiding its irresistible career  
 In thy devastating omnipotence,  
 Art king of this frail world, from the  
 red field  
 Of slaughter, from the reeking hos-  
 pital,  
 The patriot's sacred couch, the snowy  
 bed  
 Of innocence, the scaffold and the  
 throne,

A mighty voice invokes thee. Ruin  
 calls  
 His brother Death. A rare and regal  
 prey  
 He hath prepared, prowling around  
 the world ;  
 Gluted with which thou mayst re-  
 pose, and men  
 Go to their graves like flowers or  
 creeping worms,  
 Nor ever more offer at thy dark shrine  
 The unheeded tribute of a broken  
 heart.

• When on the threshold of the green  
 recess  
 The wanderer's footsteps fell, he  
 knew that death  
 Was on him, Yet a little, ere it fled,  
 Did he resign his high and holy soul  
 To images of the majestic past,  
 That paused within his passive being  
 now,  
 Like winds that bear sweet music,  
 when they breathe  
 Through some dim latticed chamber.  
 He did place  
 His pale lean hand upon the rugged  
 trunk  
 Of the old pine. Upon an ivied stone  
 Reclined his languid head, his limbs  
 did rest,  
 Diffused and motionless, on the  
 smooth brink  
 Of that obscurest chasm ;—and thus  
 he lay,  
 Surrendering to their final impulses  
 The hovering powers of life. Hope  
 and despair,  
 The torturers, slept : no mortal pain  
 or fear  
 Marred his repose, the influxes of  
 sense,  
 And his own being unalloyed by pain,  
 Yet feebler and more feeble, calmly  
 fed  
 The stream of thought, till he lay  
 breathing there  
 At peace, and faintly smiling :—his  
 last sight  
 Was the great moon, which o'er the  
 western line  
 Of the wide world her mighty horn  
 suspended,  
 With whose dun beams inwoven  
 darkness seemed

To mingle. Now upon the jagged  
hills

It rests, and still is the divided frame  
Of the vast meteor sunk, the Poet's  
blood,

That ever beat in mystic sympathy  
With nature's ebb and flow, grew  
feebler still :

And when two lessening points of  
light alone

Gleamed through the darkness, the  
alternate gasp

Of his faint respiration scarce did stir  
The stagnate night :—till the minut-  
est ray

Was quenched, the pulse yet lingered  
in his heart.

It paused—it fluttered. But when  
heaven remained

Utterly black, the murky shades in-  
volved

An image, silent, cold, and motion-  
less,

As their own voiceless earth and va-  
cant air.

Even as a vapour fed with golden  
beams

That ministered on sunlight, ere the  
west

Eclipses it, was now that wondrous  
frame—

No sense, no motion, no divinity —  
A fragile lute, on whose harmonious  
strings

The breath of heaven did wander—a  
bright stream

Once fed with many-voiced waves—  
a dream

Of youth, which night and time have  
quenched for ever,

Still, dark, and dry, and unremem-  
bered now.

O, for Medea's wondrous alchymy,  
Which wheresoe'er it fell made the  
earth gleam

With bright flowers, and the wintry  
boughs exhale

From vernal blooms fresh fragrance !  
O, that God,

Profuse of poisons, would concede the  
chalice

Which but one living man has drained,  
who now,

Vessel of deathless wrath, a slave that

feels

No proud exemption in the blighting  
curse

He bears, over the world wanders for  
ever,

Lone as incarnate death ! O, that  
the dream

Of dark magician in his visioned cave,  
Raking the cinders of a crucible

For life and power, even when his  
feeble hand

Shakes in its last decay, were the true  
law

Of this so lovely world ! But thou  
art fled

Like some frail exhalation, which the  
dawn

Robes in its golden beams,—ah !  
thou hast fled !

The brave, the gentle, and the beau-  
tiful,

The child of grace and genius. Heart-  
less things

Are done and said i' the world, and  
many worms

And beasts and men live on, and  
mighty Earth

From sea and mountain, city and  
wilderness,

In vespèr low or joyous orison,  
Lifts still its solemn voice .—but thou  
art fled—

Thou canst no longer know or love  
the shapes

Of this phantasmal scene, who have to  
thee

Been purest ministers, who are, alas !  
Now thou art not. Upon those pal-  
lid lips

So sweet even in their silence, on  
those eyes

That image sleep in death, upon that  
form

Yet safe from the worm's outrage, let  
no tear

Be shed—not even in thought. Nor,  
when those hues

Are gone, and those divinest linea-  
ments,

Worn by the senseless wind, shall live  
alone

In the frail pauses of this simple  
strain,

Let not high verse, mourning the  
memory

Of that which is no more, or painting's

we

Or sculpture, speak in feeble imagery  
 Their own cold powers. Art and  
 eloquence,  
 And all the shows o' the world, are  
 frail and vain?  
 To weep a loss that turns their light  
 to shade.  
 'It is a woe "too deep for tears," when  
 all  
 Is reft at once, when some surpassing  
 Spirit

Whose light adorned the world around  
 it, leaves  
 Those who remain behind nor sobs  
 nor groans, [hope ;  
 The passionate tumult of a clinging  
 But pale despair and cold tranquil-  
 lity,  
 Nature's vast frame, the web of  
 human things,  
 Birth and the grave, that are not as  
 they were.

## THE REVOLT OF ISLAM

### A POEM IN TWELVE CANTOS

\*Οσας δι' βροτὸν ἔθνος ἀγλαΐαις ἀπτόμεσθα  
 Περαινεῖς πρὸς ἔσχατον  
 Πλῶν' ναυσὶ δ' οὔτε πέζος ἰὼν ἂν εὐροῖς  
 Ἐς ὑπερβόρεων ἀγῶνα θαυματὰν ὁδόν.

Πινδ. Πυθ. x.

#### PREFACE

THE Poem which I now present to the world, is an attempt from which I scarcely dare to expect success, and in which a writer of established fame might fail without disgrace. It is an experiment on the temper of the public mind, as to how far a thirst for a happier condition of moral and political society survives, among the enlightened and refined, the tempests which have shaken the age in which we live. I have sought to enlist the harmony of metrical language, the ethereal combinations of the fancy, the rapid and subtle transitions of human passion, all those elements which essentially compose a Poem, in the cause of a liberal and comprehensive morality; and in the view of kindling within the bosoms of my readers, a virtuous enthusiasm for those doctrines of liberty and justice, that faith and hope in something good, which neither violence, nor misrepresentation, nor prejudice can ever totally extinguish among mankind.

For this purpose, I have chosen a story of human passion in its most universal character, diversified with moving and romantic adventures, and appealing, in contempt of all

S. P.

artificial opinions or institutions, to the common sympathies of every human breast. I have made no attempt to recommend the motives which I would substitute for those at present governing mankind, by methodical and systematic argument. I would only awaken the feelings so that the reader should see the beauty of true virtue, and be incited to those inquiries which have led to my moral and political creed, and that of some of the sublimest intellects in the world. The Poem, therefore (with the exception of the first Canto, which is purely introductory), is narrative, not didactic. It is a succession of pictures illustrating the growth and progress of individual mind aspiring after excellence, and devoted to the love of mankind; its influence in refining and making pure the most daring and uncommon impulses of the imagination, the understanding, and the senses; its impatience at "all the oppressions which are done under the sun"; its tendency to awaken public hope and to enlighten and improve mankind; the rapid effects of the application of that tendency; the awakening of an immense nation from their slavery and degradation to a true sense of moral dignity and



freedom; the bloodless dethronement of their oppressors, and the unveiling of the religious frauds by which they had been deluded into submission: the tranquillity of successful patriotism, and the universal toleration and benevolence of true philanthropy; the treachery and barbarity of hired soldiers; vice not the object of punishment and hatred, but kindness and pity; the faithlessness of tyrants; the confederacy of the Rulers of the World, and the restoration of the expelled Dynasty<sup>4</sup> by foreign arms: the massacre and extermination of the Patriots, and the victory of established power; the consequences of legitimate despotism, civil war, famine, plague, superstition, and an utter extinction of the domestic affections; the judicial murder of the advocates of Liberty; the temporary triumph of oppression, that secure earnest of its final and inevitable fall; the transient nature of ignorance and error, and the eternity of genius and virtue. Such is the series of delineations of which the Poem consists. And if the lofty passions with which it has been my scope to distinguish this story, shall not excite in the reader a generous impulse, an ardent thirst for excellence, an interest profound and strong, such as belongs to no meaner desires—let not the failure be imputed to a natural unfitness for human sympathy in these sublime and animating themes. It is the business of the Poet to communicate to others the pleasure and the enthusiasm arising out of those images and feelings, in the vivid presence of which within his own mind, consists at once his inspiration and his reward.

The panic which, like an epidemic transport, seized upon all classes of men during the excesses consequent upon the French Revolution, is gradually giving place to sanity. It has ceased to be believed, that whole generations of mankind ought to consign themselves to a hopeless inheritance of ignorance and misery, because a nation of men who had been dupes and slaves for centuries, were

incapable of conducting themselves with the wisdom and tranquillity of freemen so soon as some of their fetters were partially loosened. That their conduct could not have been marked by any other characters than ferocity and thoughtlessness, is the historical fact from which liberty derives all its recommendations, and falsehood the worst features of its deformity. There is a reflux in the tide of human things which bears the shipwrecked hopes of men into a secure haven, after the storms are past. Methinks, those who now live have survived an age of despair.

The French Revolution may be considered as one of those manifestations of a general state of feeling among civilised mankind, produced by a defect of correspondence between the knowledge existing in society and the improvement or gradual abolition of political institutions. The year 1788 may be assumed as the epoch of one of the most important crises produced by this feeling. The sympathies connected with that event extended to every bosom. The most generous and amiable natures were those which participated the most extensively in these sympathies. But such a degree of unmingled good was expected, as it was impossible to realise. If the Revolution had been in every respect prosperous, then misrule and superstition would lose half their claims to our abhorrence, as fetters which the captive can unlock with the slightest motion of his fingers, and which do not eat with poisonous rust into the soul. The revulsion occasioned by the atrocities of the demagogues and the re-establishment of successive tyrannies in France was terrible, and felt in the remotest corner of the civilised world. Could they listen to the plea of reason who had groaned under the calamities of a social state, according to the provisions of which, one man riots in luxury whilst another famishes for want of bread? Can he who the day before was a trampled slave, suddenly become liberal-minded, forbearing, and independent? This is the con-

sequence of the habits of a state of society to be produced by resolute perseverance and indefatigable hope, and long-suffering and long-believing courage, and the systematic efforts of generations of men of intellect and virtue. Such is the lesson which experience teaches now. But on the first reverses of hope in the progress of French liberty, the sanguine eagerness for good overleapt the solution of these questions, and for a time extinguished itself in the unexpectedness of their result. Thus many of the most ardent and tender-hearted of the worshippers of public good have been morally ruined, by what a partial glimpse of the events they deplored, appeared to show as the melancholy desolation of all their cherished hopes. Hence gloom and misanthropy have become the characteristics of the age in which we live, the solace of a disappointment that unconsciously finds relief only in the wilful exaggeration of its own despair. This influence has tainted the literature of the age with the hopelessness of the minds from which it flows. Metaphysics,<sup>1</sup> and inquiries into moral and political science, have become little else than vain attempts to revive exploded superstitions, or sophisms like those<sup>2</sup> of Mr. Malthus, calculated to lull the oppressors of mankind into a security of everlasting triumph. Our works of fiction and poetry have been overshadowed by the same infectious gloom. But mankind appear to me to be emerging from their trance. I am aware, methinks, of a slow, gradual, silent change. In that belief I have composed the following Poem.

I do not presume to enter into com-

petition with our greatest contemporary Poets. Yet I am unwilling to tread in the footsteps of any who have preceded me. I have sought to avoid the imitation of any style of language or versification peculiar to the original minds of which it is the character, designing that even if what I have produced be worthless, it should still be properly my own. Nor have I permitted any system relating to mere words, to divert the attention of the reader from whatever interest I may have succeeded in creating, to my own ingenuity in contriving to disgust them according to the rules of criticism. I have simply clothed my thoughts in what appeared to me the most obvious and appropriate language. A person familiar with nature, and with the most celebrated productions of the human mind, can scarcely err in following the instinct, with respect to selection of language, produced by that familiarity.

There is an education peculiarly fitted for a Poet, without which genius and sensibility can hardly fill the circle of their capacities. No education, indeed, can entitle to this appellation a dull and unobservant mind, or one, though neither dull nor unobservant, in which the channels of communication between thought and expression have been obstructed or closed. How far it is my fortune to belong to either of the latter classes, I cannot know. I aspire to be something better. The circumstances of my accidental education have been favourable to this ambition. I have been familiar from boyhood with mountains and lakes, and the sea, and the solitude of forests: Danger, which sports upon the brink of precipices, has been my playmate. I have trodden the glaciers of the Alps, and lived under the eye of Mont Blanc. I have been a wanderer among distant fields. I have sailed down mighty rivers, and seen the sun rise and set, and the stars come forth, whilst I have sailed night and day down a rapid stream among mountains. I have seen populous

<sup>1</sup> I ought to except Sir W. Drummond's *Academical Questions*; a volume of very acute and powerful metaphysical criticism.

<sup>2</sup> It is remarkable, as a symptom of the revival of public hope, that Mr. Malthus has assigned, in the later editions of his work, an indefinite dominion to moral restraint over the principle of population. This concession answers all the inferences from his doctrine unfavourable to human improvement, and reduces the *Essay on Population*, to a commentary illustrative of the unanswerableness of *Political Justice*.

cities, and have watched the passions which rise and spread, and sink and change, amongst assembled multitudes of men. I have seen the theatre of the more visible ravages of tyranny and war, cities and villages reduced to scattered groups of black and roofless houses, and the naked inhabitants sitting famished upon their desolated thresholds. I have conversed with living men of genius. The poetry of ancient Greece and Rome, and modern Italy, and our own country, has been to me like external nature, a passion and an enjoyment. Such are the sources from which the materials for the imagery of my Poem have been drawn. I have considered Poetry in its most comprehensive sense, and have read the Poets, and the Historians, and the Metaphysicians<sup>1</sup> whose writings have been accessible to me, and have looked upon the beautiful and majestic scenery of the earth as common sources of those elements which it is the province of the Poet to embody and combine. Yet the experience and the feelings to which I refer, do not in themselves constitute men Poets, but only prepare them to be the auditors of those who are. How far I shall be found to possess that more essential attribute of Poetry, the power of awakening in others sensations like those which animate my own bosom, is that which, to speak sincerely, I know not; and which, with an acquiescent and contented spirit, I expect to be taught by the effect which I shall produce upon those whom I now address.

I have avoided, as I have said before, the imitation of any contemporary style. But there must be a resemblance, which does not depend upon their own will, between all the writers of any particular age. They cannot escape from subjection to a common influence which arises out of an infinite combination of circum-

stances belonging to the times in which they live, though each is in a degree the author of the very influence by which his being is thus pervaded. Thus, the tragic Poets of the age of Pericles; the Italian revivers of ancient learning; those mighty intellects of our own country that succeeded the Reformation, the translators of the Bible, Shakspeare, Spenser, the Dramatists of the reign of Elizabeth, and Lord Bacon<sup>2</sup>; the colder spirits of the interval that succeeded;—all resemble each other, and differ from every other in their several classes. In this view of things, Ford can no more be called the imitator of Shakspeare, than Shakspeare the imitator of Ford. There were perhaps few other points of resemblance between these two men, than that which the universal and inevitable influence of their age produced. And this is an influence which neither the meanest scribbler, nor the sublimest genius of any era, can escape; and which I have not attempted to escape.

I have adopted the stanza of Spenser (a measure inexpressibly beautiful), not because I consider it a finer model of poetical harmony than the blank verse of Shakspeare and Milton, but because in the latter there is no shelter for mediocrity: you must either succeed or fail. This perhaps an aspiring spirit should desire. But I was enticed, also, by the brilliancy and magnificence of sound which a mind that has been nourished upon musical thoughts, can produce by a just and harmonious arrangement of the pauses of this measure. Yet there will be found some instances where I have completely failed in this attempt, and one, which I here request the reader to consider as an erratum, where there is left most inadvertently an alexandrine in the middle of a stanza.

But in this, as in every other respect, I have written fearlessly. It is the misfortune of this age, that its Writers, too thoughtless of immor-

<sup>1</sup> In this sense there may be such a thing as perfectibility in works of fiction, notwithstanding the concession often made by the advocates of human improvement that perfectibility is a term applicable only to science.

<sup>2</sup> Milton stands alone in the age which he illumined.

talities, are exquisitely sensible to temporary praise or blame. They write with the fear of Reviews before their eyes. This system of criticism sprang up in that torpid interval when Poetry was not. Poetry, and the art which professes to regulate and limit its powers, cannot subsist together. Longinus could not have been the contemporary of Homer, nor Boileau of Horace. Yet this species of criticism never presumed to assert an understanding of its own: it has always, unlike true science, followed, not preceded, the opinion of mankind, and would even now bribe with worthless adulation some of our greatest Poets to impose gratuitous fetters on their own imaginations, and become unconscious accomplices in the daily murder of all genius either not so aspiring or not so fortunate as their own. I have sought therefore to write, as I believe that Homer, Shakspeare, and Milton wrote, in utter disregard of anonymous censure. I am certain that calumny and misrepresentation, though it may move me to compassion, cannot disturb my peace. I shall understand the expressive silence of those sagacious enemies who dare not trust themselves to speak. I shall endeavour to extract from the midst of insult, and contempt, and maledictions, those admonitions which may tend to correct whatever imperfections such censurers may discover in this my first serious appeal to the Public. If certain Critics were as clear-sighted as they are malignant, how great would be the benefit to be derived from their virulent writings! As it is, I fear I shall be malicious enough to be amused with their paltry tricks and lame invectives. Should the public judge that my composition is worthless, I shall indeed bow before the tribunal from which Milton received his crown of immortality, and shall seek to gather, if I live, strength from that defeat which may nerve me to some new enterprise of thought which may *not* be worthless. I cannot conceive that Lucretius, when he meditated that poem whose

doctrines are yet the basis of our metaphysical knowledge, and whose eloquence has been the wonder of mankind, wrote in awe of such censure as the hired sophists of the impure and superstitious noblemen of Rome might affix to what he should produce. It was at the period when Greece was led captive, and Asia made tributary to the Republic, fast verging itself to slavery and ruin, that a multitude of Syrian captives, bigoted to the worship of their obscene Ashtaroth, and the unworthy successors of Socrates and Zeno, found there a precarious subsistence by administering, under the name of freedmen, to the vices and vanities of the great. These wretched men were skilled to plead, with a superficial but plausible set of sophisms, in favour of that contempt for virtue which is the portion of slaves, and that faith in portents, the most fatal substitute for benevolence in the imaginations of men, which, arising from the enslaved communities of the East, then first began to overwhelm the western nations in its stream. Were these the kind of men whose disapprobation the wise and lofty-minded Lucretius should have regarded with a salutary awe? The latest and perhaps the meanest of those who follow in his footsteps, would disdain to hold life on such conditions.

The Poem now presented to the Public occupied little more than six months in the composition. That period has been devoted to the task with unremitting ardour and enthusiasm. I have exercised a watchful and earnest criticism on my work as it grew under my hands. I would willingly have sent it forth to the world with that perfection which long labour and revision is said to bestow. But I found that if I should gain something in exactness by this method, I might lose much of the newness and energy of imagery and language as it flowed fresh from my mind. And although the mere composition occupied no more than six months, the thoughts thus arranged

were slowly gathered in as many years.

I trust that the reader will carefully distinguish between those opinions which have a dramatic propriety in reference to the characters which they are designed to elucidate, and such as are properly my own. The erroneous and degrading idea which men have conceived of a Supreme Being, for instance, is spoken against, but not the Supreme Being itself. The belief which some superstitious persons whom I have brought upon the stage entertain of the Deity, as

injurious to the character of his benevolence, is widely different from my own. In recommending also a great and important change in the spirit which animates the social institutions of mankind, I have avoided all flattery to those violent and malignant passions of our nature, which are ever on the watch to mingle with and to alloy the most beneficial innovations. There is no quarter given to Revenge, or Envy, or Prejudice. Love is celebrated everywhere as the sole law which should govern the moral world.

1817.

### DEDICATION

There is no danger to a Man, that knows  
What life and death is : there's not any law  
Exceeds his knowledge : neither is it lawful  
That he should stoop to any other law.

CHAPMAN.

### TO MARY

#### I

So now my summer-task is ended, Mary,  
And I return to thee, mine own heart's home ;  
As to his Queen some victor Knight of Faëry,  
Earning bright spoils for her enchanted dome ;  
Nor thou disdain, that ere my fame become  
A star among the stars of mortal night,  
If it indeed may cleave its natal gloom,  
Its doubtful promise thus I would unite  
With thy beloved name, thou Child of love and light.

#### II

The toil which stole from thee so many an hour  
Is ended—and the fruit is at thy feet ;  
No longer where the woods to frame a bower  
With interlaced branches mix and meet,  
Or where with sound like many voices sweet,  
Water-falls leap among wild islands green,  
Which framed for my lone boat a lone retreat  
Of moss-grown trees and weeds, shall I be seen :  
But beside thee, where still my heart has ever been.

#### III

Thoughts of great deeds were mine, dear Friend, when first  
The clouds which wrap this world from youth did pass.  
I do remember well the hour which burst  
My spirit's sleep : a fresh May-dawn it was,  
When I walked forth upon the glittering grass,  
And wept, I knew not why : until there rose  
From the near school-room, voices, that, alas !  
Were but one echo from a world of woes—  
The harsh and grating strife of tyrants and of foes.

## IV

And then I clasped my hands and looked around,  
 But none was near to mock my streaming eyes,  
 Which poured their warm drops on the sunny ground—  
 So without shame, I spake :—" I will be wise,  
 And just, and free, and mild, if in me lies  
 'Such power, for I grow weary to behold  
 The selfish and the strong still tyrannize  
 Without reproach or check.'" I then controlled  
 My tears, my heart grew calm, and I was meek and bold.

## V

And from that hour did I with earnest thought  
 Heap knowledge from forbidden mines of lore,  
 Yet nothing that my tyrants knew or taught  
 I cared to learn, but from that secret store  
 Wrought linked armour for my soul, before  
 It might walk forth to war among mankind ;  
 Thus power and hope were strengthened more and more  
 Within me, till there came upon my mind  
 A sense of loneliness, a thirst with which I pined.

## VI

Alas, that love should be a blight and snare  
 To those who seek all sympathies in one !—  
 Such once I sought in vain ; then black despair,  
 The shadow of a starless night, was thrown  
 Over the world in which I moved alone :—  
 Yet never found I one not false to me,  
 Hard hearts, and cold, like weights of icy stone  
 Which crushed and withered mine, that could not be  
 Aught but a lifeless clog, until revived by thee.

## VII

Thou Friend, whose presence on my wintry heart  
 Fell, like bright Spring upon some herbless plain,  
 How beautiful and calm and free thou wert  
 In thy young wisdom, when the mortal chain  
 Of Custom thou didst burst and rend in twain,  
 And walked as free as light the clouds among,  
 Which many an envious slave then breathed in vain  
 From his dim dungeon, and my spirit sprung  
 To meet thee from the woes which had begirt it long.

## VIII

No more alone through the world's wilderness,  
 Although I trod the paths of high intent,  
 I journeyed now : no more companionless,  
 Where solitude is like despair, I went.—  
 There is the wisdom of a stern content  
 When Poverty can blight the just and good,  
 When Infamy dares mock the innocent,  
 And cherished friends turn with the multitude  
 To trample : this was ours, and we unshaken stood !

## IX

Now has descended a serener hour,  
 And with inconstant fortune, friends return ;

Though suffering leaves the knowledge and the power  
Which says :—Let scorn be not repaid with scorn,  
And from thy side two gentle babes are born  
To fill our home with smiles, and thus are we  
Most fortunate beneath life's beaming morn :  
And these delights, and thou, have been to me  
The parents of the Song I consecrate to thee.

## X

Is it, that now my inexperienced fingers  
But strike the prelude of a loftier strain ?  
Or, must the lyre on which my spirit lingers  
Soon pause in silence, ne'er to sound again,  
Though it might shake the Anarch Custom's reign,  
And charm the minds of men to Truth's own sway,  
Holier than was Amphion's ? I would fain  
Reply in hope—but I am worn away,  
And Death and Love are yet contending for their prey.

## XI

And what art thou ? I know, but dare not speak :  
Time may interpret to his silent years.  
Yet in the paleness of thy thoughtful cheek,  
And in the light thine ample forehead wears,  
And in thy sweetest smiles, and in thy tears,  
And in thy gentle speech, a prophecy  
Is whispered, to subdue my fondest fears :  
And through thine eyes, even in thy soul I see  
A lamp of vestal fire burning internally.

## XII

They say that thou wert lovely from thy birth,  
Of glorious parents thou aspiring Child.  
I wonder not—for One then left this earth  
Whose life was like a setting planet mild,  
Which clothed thee in the radiance undefiled  
Of its departing glory ; still her fame  
Shines on thee, through the tempests dark and wild  
Which shake these latter days ; and thou canst claim  
The shelter, from thy Sire, of an immortal name.

## XIII

One voice came forth from many a mighty spirit,  
Which was the echo of three thousand years ;  
And the tumultuous world stood mute to hear it,  
As some lone man who in a desert hears  
The music of his home :—unwonted fears  
Fell on the pale oppressors of our race,  
And Faith, and Custom, and low-thoughted cares,  
Like thunder-stricken dragons, for a space  
Left the torn human heart, their food and dwelling-place.

## XIV

Truth's deathless voice pauses among mankind !  
If there must be no response to my cry—  
If men must rise and stamp with fury blind  
On his pure name who loves them,—thou and I,

Sweet Friend ! can look from our tranquillity  
 Like lamps into the world's tempestuous night,—  
 Two tranquil stars, while clouds are passing by  
 Which wrap them from the foundering seaman's sight,  
 That burn from year to year with unextinguished light.

## CANTO I

## I

WHEN the last hope of trampled France had failed  
 Like a brief dream of unremaining glory,  
 From visions of despair I rose, and scaled  
 The peak of an aerial promontory,  
 Whose caverned base with the vexed surge was hoary,  
 And saw the golden dawn break forth, and waken  
 Each cloud, and every wave :—but transitory  
 The calm : for sudden, the firm earth was shaken,  
 As if by the last wreck its frame were overtaken.

## II

So as I stood, one blast of muttering thunder  
 Burst in far peals along the waveless deep,  
 When, gathering fast, around, above, and under,  
 Long trains of tremulous mist began to creep,  
 Until their complicating lines did steep  
 The orient sun in shadow :—not a sound  
 Was heard ; one horrible repose did keep  
 The forests and the floods, and all around  
 Darkness more dread than night was poured upon the ground.

## III

Hark ! 'tis the rushing of a wind that sweeps  
 Earth and the ocean. See ! the lightnings yawn  
 Deluging Heaven with fire, and the lashed deeps  
 Glitter and boil beneath : it rages on,  
 One mighty stream, whirlwind and waves upthrown,  
 Lightning, and hail, and darkness eddying by,  
 There is a pause—the sea-birds, that were gone  
 Into their caves to shriek, come forth to spy  
 What calm has fall'n on earth, what light is in the sky.

## IV

For, where the irresistible storm had cloven  
 That fearful darkness, the blue sky was seen  
 Fretted with many a fair cloud interwoven  
 Most delicately, and the ocean green,  
 Beneath that opening spot of blue serene,  
 Quivered like burning emerald : calm was spread  
 On all below ; but far on high, between  
 Earth and the upper air, the vast clouds fled,  
 Countless and swift as leaves on autumn's tempest shed.

## V

For ever as the war became more fierce  
 Between the whirlwinds and the rack on high,  
 That spot grew more serene ; blue light did pierce  
 The woof of those white clouds, which seemed to lie



Far, deep, and motionless, while through the sky  
 The pallid semicircle of the moon  
 Past on, in slow and moving majesty;  
 Its upper horn arrayed in mists, which soon  
 But slowly fled, like dew beneath the beams of moon.

## VI

I could not choose but gaze; a fascination  
 Dwelt in that moon, and sky, and clouds, which drew  
 My fancy thither, and in expectation  
 Of what I knew not, I remained —the hue  
 Of the white moon, amid that heaven so blue  
 Suddenly stained with shadow did appear;  
 A speck, a cloud, a shape, approaching grew,  
 Like a great ship in the sun's sinking sphere  
 Beheld afar at sea, and swift it came anear—

## VII

Even like a bark, which from a chasm of mountains,  
 Dark, vast, and overhanging, on a river  
 Which there collects the strength of all its fountains,  
 Comes forth, whilst with the speed its frame doth quiver,  
 Sails, oars, and stream, tending to one endeavour,  
 So, from that chasm of light a winged Form  
 On all the winds of heaven approaching ever  
 Floated, dilating as it came the storm  
 Pursued it with fierce blasts, and lightnings swift and warm.

## VIII

A course precipitous, of dizzy speed,  
 Suspending thought and breath; a monstrous sight!  
 For in the air do I behold indeed  
 An Eagle and a Serpent wreathed in fight —  
 And now, relaxing its impetuous flight  
 Before the aerial rock on which I stood,  
 The Eagle, hovering, wheeled to left and right,  
 And hung with lingering wings over the flood,  
 And startled with its yells the wide air's solitude.

## IX

A shaft of light upon its wings descended,  
 And every golden feather gleamed therein—  
 Feather and scale inextricably blended.  
 The Serpent's mailed and many-coloured skin  
 Shone through the plumes; its coils were twined within  
 By many a swollen and knotted fold, and high  
 And far, the neck receding lithe and thin,  
 Sustained a crested head, which warily  
 Shifted and glanced before the Eagle's steadfast eye.

## X

Around, around, in ceaseless circles wheeling  
 With clang of wings and scream, the Eagle sailed  
 Incessantly—sometimes on high concealing  
 Its lessening orbs, sometimes as if it failed,  
 Drooped through the air; and still it shrieked and wailed,

And casting back its eager head, with beak  
 And talon unremittingly assailed  
 The wreathed Serpent, who did ever seek  
 Upon his enemy's heart a mortal wound to wreak.

## XI

What life, what power, was kindled and arose  
 Within the sphere of that appalling fray !  
 For, from the encounter of those wondrous foes,  
 A vapour like the sea's suspended spray  
 Hung gathered : in the void air, far away,  
 Floated the shattered plumes ; bright scales did leap,  
 Where'er the Eagle's talons made their way,  
 Like sparks into the darkness ;—as they sweep,  
 Blood stains the snowy foam of the tumultuous deep.

## XII

Swift chances in that combat—many a check,  
 And many a change, a dark and wild turmoil ;  
 Sometimes the Snake around his enemy's neck  
 Locked in stiff rings his adamant coil,  
 Until the Eagle, faint with pain and toil,  
 Remitted his strong flight, and near the sea  
 Languidly fluttered, hopeless so to foil  
 His adversary, who then reared on high  
 His red and burning crest, radiant with victory.

## XIII

Then on the white edge of the bursting surge,  
 Where they had sunk together, would the Snake  
 Relax his suffocating grasp, and scourge  
 The wind with his wild writhings ; for to break  
 That chain of torment, the vast bird would shake  
 That strength of his unconquerable wings  
 As in despair, and with his sinewy neck  
 Dissolved in sudden shock those linked rings,  
 Then soar—as swift as smoke from a volcano springs.

## XIV

Wile baffled wile, and strength encountered strength,  
 Thus long, but unprevailing :—the event  
 Of that portentous fight appeared at length :  
 Until the lamp of day was almost spent  
 It had endured, when lifeless, stark, and rent,  
 Hung high that mighty Serpent, and at last  
 Fell to the sea, while o'er the continent,  
 With clang of wings and scream the Eagle past,  
 Heavily borne away on the exhausted blast.

## XV

And with it fled the tempest, so that ocean  
 And earth and sky shone through the atmosphere—  
 Only, it was strange to see the red commotion  
 Of waves like mountains o'er the sinking sphere  
 Of sunset sweep, and their fierce roar to hear  
 Amid the calm : down the steep path I wound  
 To the sea-shore—the evening was most clear

And beautiful, and there the sea I found  
Calm as a cradled child in dreamless slumber bound.

## XVI

There was a woman, beautiful as morning,  
Sitting beneath the rocks upon the sand  
Of the waste sea—fair as one flower adorning  
An icy wilderness—each delicate hand  
Lay crossed upon her bosom, and the band  
Of her dark hair had fallen, and so she sate  
Looking upon the waves ; on the bare strand  
Upon the sea-mark a small boat did wait,  
Fair as herself, like Love by Hope left desolate.

## XVII

It seemed that this fair Shape had looked upon  
That unimaginable fight, and now  
That her sweet eyes were weary of the sun,  
As brightly it illustrated her woe ;  
For in the tears which silently to flow  
Paused not, its lustre hung ; she watching aye  
The foam-wreaths which the faint tide wove below  
Upon the spangled sands, groaned heavily,  
And after every groan looked up over the sea.

## XVIII

And when she saw the wounded Serpent make  
His path between the waves, her lips grew pale,  
Parted and quivered ; the tears ceased to break  
From her immovable eyes ; no voice of wail  
Escaped her ; but she rose, and on the gale  
Loosening her star-bright robe and shadowy hair,  
Poured forth her voice ; the caverns of the vale  
That opened to the ocean, caught it there,  
And filled with silver sounds the overflowing air.

## XIX

She spake in language whose strange melody  
Might not belong to earth. I heard, alone,  
What made its music more melodious be,  
The pity and the love of every tone ;  
But to the snake those accents sweet were known,  
His native tongue and hers : nor did he beat  
The hoar spray idly then, but winding on  
Through the green shadows of the waves that meet  
Near to the shore, did pause beside her snowy feet.

## XX

Then on the sands the Woman sate again,  
And wept and clasped her hands, and all between,  
Renewed the unintelligible strain  
Of her melodious voice and eloquent mien ;  
And she unveiled her bosom, and the green  
And glancing shadows of the sea did play  
O'er its marmoreal depth :—one moment seen,  
For ere the next, the Serpent did obey  
Her voice, and, coiled in rest, in her embrace it lay.

## XXI

Then she arose, and smiled on me with eyes  
Serene yet sorrowing, like that planet fair,  
While yet the daylight lingereth in the skies  
Which cleaves with arrowy beams the dark-red air,  
And said : To grieve is wise, but the despair  
Was weak and vain which led thee here from sleep :  
This shalt thou know, and more, if thou dost dare  
With me and with this Serpent, o'er the deep,  
A voyage divine and strange, companionship to keep.

## XXII

Her voice was like the wildest, saddest tone,  
Yet sweet, of some loved voice heard long ago.  
I wept. Shall this fair woman all alone  
Over the sea with that fierce Serpent go ?  
His head is on her heart, and who can know  
How soon he may devour his feeble prey ?  
Such were my thoughts, when the tide 'gan to flow ;  
And that strange boat, like the moon's shade did sway  
Amid reflected stars that in the waters lay.

## XXIII

A boat of rare device, which had no sail  
But its own curved prow of thin moonstone,  
Wrought like a web of texture fine and frail,  
To catch those gentlest winds which are not known  
To breathe, but by the steady speed alone  
With which it cleaves the sparkling sea ; and now  
We are embarked, the mountains hang and frown  
Over the starry deep that gleams below  
A vast and dim expanse, as o'er the waves we go.

## XXIV

And as we sailed, a strange and awful tale  
That Woman told, like such mysterious dream  
As makes the slumberer's cheek with wonder pale !  
'Twas midnight, and around, a shoreless stream,  
Wide ocean rolled, when that majestic theme  
Shrined in her heart found utterance, and she bent  
Her looks on mine ; those eyes a kindling beam  
Of love divine into my spirit sent,  
And, ere her lips could move, made the air eloquent.

## XXV

Speak not to me, but hear ! much shalt thou learn,  
Much must remain unthought, and more untold,  
In the dark Future's ever-flowing urn :  
Know then, that from the depth of ages old  
Two Powers o'er mortal things dominion hold,  
Ruling the world with a divided lot,  
Immortal, all-pervading, manifold,  
Twin Genii, equal Gods—when life and thought  
Sprang forth, they burst the womb of inessential Nought,

## XXVI

The earliest dweller of the world alone

Stood on the verge of chaos : Lo ! afar  
 O'er the wide wild abyss two meteors shone,  
 Sprung from the depth of its tempestuous jar :  
 A blood-red Comet and the Morning Star  
 Mingling their beams in combat—as he stood  
 All thoughts within his mind waged mutual war  
 In dreadful sympathy—when to the flood  
 That fair star fell, he turned and shed his brother's blood.

## XXVII

Thus evil triumphed, and the Spirit of Evil,  
 One Power of many shapes which none may know,  
 One Shape of many names ; the Fiend did revel  
 In victory, reigning o'er a world of woe,  
 For the new race of man went to and fro,  
 Famished and homeless, loathed and loathing, wild,  
 And hating good—for his immortal foe  
 He changed from starry shape, beauteous and mild,  
 To a dire Snake, with man and beast unreconciled.

## XXVIII

The darkness lingering o'er the dawn of things,  
 Was Evil's breath and life ; this made him strong  
 To soar aloft with overshadowing wings ;  
 And the great Spirit of Good did creep among  
 The nations of mankind, and every tongue  
 Cursed, and blasphemed him as he past ; for none  
 Knew good from evil though their names were hung  
 In mockery o'er the fane where many a groan,  
 As King, and Lord, and God, the conquering Fiend did own.

## XXIX

The Fiend, whose name was Legion ; Death, Decay,  
 Earthquake, and Blight, and Want, and Madness pale,  
 Winged and wan diseases, an array  
 Numerous as leaves that strew the autumnal gale ;  
 Poison, a snake in flowers, beneath the veil  
 Of food and mirth, hiding his mortal head ;  
 And, without whom all these might nought avail,  
 Fear, Hatred, Faith, and Tyranny, who spread  
 Those subtle nets which snare the living and the dead.

## XXX

His spirit is their power, and they his slaves  
 In air, in light, and thought, and language dwell ;  
 And keep their state from palaces to graves,  
 In all resorts of men—invisible ;  
 But when, in ebon mirror, Nightmare fell,  
 To tyrant or impostor bids them rise.  
 Black winged demon forms—whom, from the hell,  
 His reign and dwelling beneath nether skies,  
 He loosens to their dark and blasting ministries.

## XXXI

In the world's youth his empire was as firm  
 As its foundations—soon the Spirit of Good,  
 Though in the likeness of a loathsome worm,

Spang from the billows of the formless flood,  
Which shrank and fled ; and with that fiend of blood  
Renewed the doubtful war—thrones then first shook,  
And earth's immense and trampled multitude,  
In hope on their own powers began to look,  
And Fear, the demon pale, his sanguine shrine forsook.

## XXXII

Then Greece arose, and to its bards and sages,  
In dream the golden-pinioned Genii came,  
Even where they slept amid the night of ages  
Steeping their hearts in the divinest flame  
Which thy breath kindled, Power of holiest name !  
And oft in cycles since, when darkness gave  
New weapons to thy foe, their sunlike fame  
Upon the combat shone—a light to save,  
Like Paradise spread forth beyond the shadowy grave.

## XXXIII

Such is this conflict—when mankind doth strive  
With its oppressors in a strife of blood,  
Or when free thoughts, like lightnings, are alive ;  
And in each bosom of the multitude  
Justice and truth, with custom's hydra brood,  
Wage silent war ;—when priests and kings dissemble  
In smiles or frowns their fierce disquietude,  
When round pure hearts, a host of hopes assemble,  
The Snake and Eagle meet—the world's foundations tremble !

## XXXIV

Thou hast beheld that fight—when to thy home  
Thou dost return, steep not its hearth in tears ;  
Though thou mayst hear that earth is now become  
The tyrant's garbage, which to his compeers,  
The vile reward of their dishonoured years,  
He will dividing give.—The victor Fiend  
Omnipotent of yore, now quails, and fears  
His triumph dearly won, which soon will lend  
An impulse swift and sure to his approaching end.

## XXXV

List, stranger, list ! mine is a human form,  
Like that thou wearest—touch me—shrink not now !  
My hand thou feel'st is not a ghost's, but warm  
With human blood.—'Twas many years ago,  
Since first my thirsting soul aspired to know  
The secrets of this wondrous world, when deep  
My heart was pierced with sympathy, for woe  
Which could not be mine own—and thought did keep  
In dream, unnatural watch beside an infant's sleep.

## XXXVI

Woe could not be mine own, since far from men  
I dwelt, a free and happy orphan child,  
By the sea-shore, in a deep mountain glen ;  
And near the waves, and through the forests wild,  
I roamed, to storm and darkness reconciled,

For I was calm while tempest shook the sky :  
 But, when the breathless heavens in beauty smiled,  
 I wept sweet tears, yet too tumultuously  
 For peace, and clasped my hands aloft in ecstasy.

## XXXVII

These were forebodings of my fate.—Before  
 A woman's heart beat in my virgin breast,  
 It had been nurtured in divinest lore :  
 A dying poet gave me books, and blest  
 With wild but holy talk the sweet unrest  
 In which I watched him as he died away—  
 A youth with hoary hair—a fleeting guest  
 Of our lone mountains—and this lore did sway  
 My spirit like a storm, contending there away.

## XXXVIII

Thus the dark tale which history doth unfold,  
 I knew, but not, methinks, as others know,  
 For they weep not ; and Wisdom had unrolled  
 The clouds which hide the gulf of mortal woe :  
 To few can she that warning vision show,  
 For I loved all things with intense devotion ;  
 So that when Hope's deep source in fullest flow,  
 Like earthquake did uplift the stagnant ocean  
 Of human thoughts—mine shook beneath the wide emotion.

## XXXIX

When first the living blood through all these veins  
 Kindled a thought in sense, great France sprang forth  
 And seized, as if to break, the ponderous chains  
 Which bind in woe the nations of the earth.  
 I saw, and started from my cottage hearth ;  
 And to the clouds and waves in tameless gladness  
 Shrieked, till they caught immeasurable mirth—  
 And laughed in light and music : soon sweet madness  
 Was poured upon my heart, a soft and thrilling sadness.

## XL

Deep slumber fell on me ;—my dreams were fire,  
 Soft and delightful thoughts did rest and hover  
 Like shadows o'er my brain ; and strange desire  
 The tempest of a passion, raging over  
 My tranquil soul, its depths with light did cover,  
 Which past ; and calm, and darkness, sweeter far  
 Came—then I loved ; but not a human lover !  
 For when I rose from sleep, the Morning Star  
 Shone through the woodbine wreaths which round my casement were.

## XLI

'Twas like an eye which seemed to smile on me.  
 I watched till, by the sun made pale, it sank  
 Under the billows of the heaving sea ;  
 But from its beams deep love my spirit drank,  
 And to my brain the boundless world now shrank  
 Into one thought—one image—yea for ever !  
 Even like the day's-spring, poured on vapours dank,  
 The beams of that one star did shoot and quiver  
 Through my benighted mind—and were extinguished never.

## XLII

The day past thus : at night, methought in dream  
 A shape of speechless beauty did appear ;  
 It stood like light on a careering stream  
 Of golden clouds which shook the atmosphere ;  
 A winged youth, his radiant brow did wear  
 The Morning Star : a wild dissolving bliss  
 Over my frame he breathed, approaching near,  
 And bent his eyes of kindling tenderness  
 Near mine, and on my lips impressed a lingering kiss,

## XLIII

And said : A Spirit loves thee, mortal maiden,  
 How wilt thou prove thy worth ? Then joy and sleep  
 Together fled ; my soul was deeply laden,  
 And to the shore I went to muse and weep ;  
 But as I moved, over my heart did creep  
 A joy less soft, but more profound and strong  
 Than my sweet dream ; and it forbade to keep  
 The path of the sea-shore : that Spirit's tongue  
 Seemed whispering in my heart, and bore my steps along.

## XLIV

How, to that vast and peopled city led,  
 Which was a field of holy warfare then,  
 I walked among the dying and the dead,  
 And shared in fearless deeds with evil men,  
 Calm as an angel in the dragon's den—  
 How I braved death for liberty and truth,  
 And spurned at peace, and power, and fame, and when  
 Those hopes had lost the glory of their youth,  
 How sadly I returned—might move the hearer's ruth.

## XLV

Warm tears throng fast ! the tale may not be said—  
 Know then, that when this grief had been subdued,  
 I was not left, like others, cold and dead ;  
 The Spirit whom I loved in solitude  
 Sustained his child : the tempest-shaken wood,  
 The waves, the fountains, and the hush of night—  
 These were his voice, and well I understood  
 His smile divine when the calm sea was bright  
 With silent stars, and Heaven was breathless with delight.

## XLVI

In lonely glens, amid the roar of rivers,  
 When the dim nights were moonless, have I known  
 Joys which no tongue can tell ; my pale lip quivers  
 When thought revisits them :—know thou alone,  
 That after many wondrous years were flown,  
 I was awakened by a shriek of woe ;  
 And over me a mystic robe was thrown,  
 By viewless hands, and a bright star did glow  
 Before my steps—the Snake then met his mortal foe.

## XLVII

Thou fear'st not then the Serpent on thy heart ?  
 Fear it ! she said with brief and passionate cry,



And spake no more : that silence made me start—  
 I looked and we were sailing pleasantly,  
 Swift as a cloud between the sea and sky,  
 Beneath the rising moon seen far away ;  
 Mountains of ice, like sapphire, piled on high  
 Hemming the horizon round, in silence lay  
 On the still waters,—these we did approach alway.

## XLVIII

And swift and swifter grew the vessel's motion,  
 So that a dizzy trance fell on my brain—  
 Wild music woke me : we had past the ocean  
 Which girds the Pole, Nature's remotest reign—  
 And we glode fast o'er a pellucid plain  
 Of waters, azure with the noon-tide day.  
 Ethereal mountains shone around—a Fane  
 Stood in the midst, girt by green isles which lay  
 On the blue sunny deep, resplendent far away.

## XLIX

It was a Temple, such as mortal hand  
 Has never built, nor ecstasy, or dream,  
 Reared in the cities of enchanted land :  
 'Twas likest Heaven, ere yet day's purple streak  
 Ebbs o'er the western forest, while the gleam  
 Of the unrisen moon among the clouds  
 Is gathering—when with many a golden beam  
 The thronging constellations rush in crowds,  
 Paving with fire the sky and the marmoreal floods.

## L

Like what may be conceived of this vast dome,  
 When from the depths which thought can seldom pierce  
 Genius beholds it rise, his native home,  
 Girt by the deserts of the Universe,  
 Yet, nor in painting's light, or mightier verse,  
 Or sculpture's marble language, can invest  
 That shape to mortal sense—such glooms immerse  
 That incommunicable sight, and rest  
 Upon the labouring brain and over-burthened breast.

## LI

Winding among the lawny islands fair,  
 Whose bloomy forests starred the shadowy deep,  
 The wingless boat paused where an ivory stair  
 Its fretwork in the crystal sea did steep,  
 Encircling that vast Fane's aerial heap :  
 We disembarked, and through a portal wide  
 We passed—whose roof of moonstone carved, did keep  
 A glimmering o'er the forms on every side,  
 Sculptures like life and thought ; immovable, deep-eyed.

## LII

We came to a vast hall, whose glorious roof  
 Was diamond, which had drunk the lightning's sheen  
 In darkness, and now poured it through the woof  
 Of spell-inwoven clouds hung there to screen

Its blinding splendour—through such veil was seen  
That work of subtlest power, divine and rare ;  
Orb above orb, with starry shapes between,  
And horned moons, and meteors strange and fair,  
On night-black columns poised—one hollow hemisphere !

## LIII

Ten thousand columns in that quivering light  
Distinct—between whose shafts wound far away  
The long and labyrinthine aisles—more bright  
With their own radiance than the Heaven of Day ;  
And on the jasper walls around, there lay  
Paintings, the poesy of mightiest thought,  
Which did the Spirit's history display ;  
A tale of passionate change, divinely taught,  
Which, in their winged dance, unconscious Genii wrought.

## LIV

Beneath, there sate on many a sapphire throne,  
The great, who had departed from mankind,  
A mighty Senate ; some whose white hairs shone  
Like mountain snow, mild, beautiful, and blind.  
Some female forms, whose gestures beamed with mind ;  
And ardent youths, and children bright and fair ;  
And some had lyres whose strings were intertwined  
With pale and clinging flames, which ever there  
Waked faint yet thrilling sounds that pierced the crystal air.

## LV

One seat was vacant in the midst, a throne,  
Reared on a pyramid like sculptured flame,  
Distinct with circling steps which rested on  
Their own deep fire—soon as the woman came  
Into that hall, she shrieked the Spirit's name  
And fell ; and vanished slowly from the sight.  
Darkness arose from her dissolving frame,  
Which gathering, filled that dome of woven light,  
Blotting its sphered stars with supernatural night.

## LVI

Then first two glittering lights were seen to glide  
In circles on the amethystine floor,  
Small serpent eyes trailing from side to side,  
Like meteors on a river's grassy shore,  
They round each other rolled, dilating more  
And more—then rose, commingling into one,  
One clear and mighty planet hanging o'er  
A cloud of deepest shadow which was thrown  
Athwart the glowing steps and the crystalline throne.

## LVII

The cloud which rested on that cone of flame  
Was cloven : beneath the planet sate a Form,  
Fairer than tongue can speak or thought may frame,  
The radiance of whose limbs rose-like and warm  
Flowed forth, and did with softest light inform

The shadowy dome, the sculptures, and the state  
Of those assembled shapes—with clinging charm  
Sinking upon their hearts and mine—He sate  
Majestic yet most mild—calm, yet compassionate.

## LVIII

Wonder and joy a passing faintness threw  
Over my brow—a hand supported me,  
Whose touch was magic strength : an eye of blue  
Looked into mine, like moonlight, soothingly ;  
And a voice said—Thou must a listener be  
This day—two mighty spirits now return,  
Like birds of calm, from the world's raging sea, .  
They pour fresh light from Hope's immortal urn ;  
A tale of human power—despair not—list and learn !

## LIX

I looked, and lo ! one stood forth eloquently,  
His eyes were dark and deep, and the clear brow  
Which shadowed them was like the morning sky,  
The cloudless Heaven of Spring, when in their flow  
Through the bright air, the soft winds as they blow  
Wake the green world—his gestures did obey  
The oracular mind that made his features glow,  
And where his curved lips half open lay,  
Passion's divinest stream had made impetuous way.

## LX

Beneath the darkness of his outspread hair  
He stood thus beautiful : but there was One  
Who sate beside him like his shadow there,  
And held his hand—far lovelier—she was known  
To be thus fair by the few lines alone  
Which through her floating locks and gathered cloak,  
Glances of soul-dissolving glory, shone :—  
None else beheld her eyes, in him they woke  
Memories which found a tongue, as thus he silence broke.

## CANTO II

## I

THE starlight smile of children, the sweet looks  
Of women, the fair breast from which I fed,  
The murmur of the unreposing brooks,  
And the green light which, shifting overhead,  
Some tangled bower of vines around me shed,  
The shells on the sea-sand, and the wild flowers,  
The lamplight through the rafters cheerily spread,  
And on the twining flax—in life's young hours  
These sights and sounds did nurse my spirit's folded powers.

## II

In Argolis beside the echoing sea,  
Such impulses within my mortal frame  
Arose, and they were dear to memory,  
Like tokens of the dead :—but others came  
Soon, in another shape : the wondrous fame

Of the past world, the vital words and deeds  
 Of minds whom neither time nor change can tame,  
 Traditions dark and old, whence evil creeds  
 Start forth, and whose dim shade a stream of poison feeds.

## III

I heard, as all have heard, the various story  
 Of human life, and wept unwilling tears,  
 Feeble historians of its shame and glory,  
 False disputants on all its hopes and fears,  
 Victims who worshipped ruin,—chroniclers  
 Of daily scorn, and slaves who loathed their state;  
 Yet flattering power had given its ministers  
 A throne of judgment in the grave—'twas fate,  
 That among such as these my youth should seek its mate.

## IV

The land in which I lived, by a fell bane  
 Was withered up. Tyrants dwelt side by side,  
 And stabled in our homes,—until the chain  
 Stifled the captive's cry, and to abide  
 That blasting curse men had no shame—all vied  
 In evil, slave and despot; fear with lust  
 Strange fellowship through mutual hate had tied,  
 Like two dark serpents tangled in the dust,  
 Which on the paths of men their mingling poison thrust.

## V

Earth, our bright home, its mountains and its waters,  
 And the ethereal shapes which are suspended  
 Over its green expanse, and those fair daughters,  
 The clouds, of Sun and Ocean, who have blended  
 The colours of the air since first extended  
 It cradled the young world, none wandered forth  
 To see or feel: a darkness had descended  
 On every heart: the light which shows its worth,  
 Must among gentle thoughts and fearless take its birth.

## VI

This vital world, this home of happy spirits,  
 Was as a dungeon to my blasted kind,  
 All that despair from murdered hope inherits  
 They sought, and in their helpless misery blind,  
 A deeper prison and heavier chains did find,  
 And stronger tyrants:—a dark gulf before,  
 The realm of a stern Ruler, yawned; behind,  
 Terror and Time conflicting drove, and bore  
 On their tempestuous flood the shrieking wretch from shore.

## VII

Out of that Ocean's wrecks had Guilt and Woe  
 Framed a dark dwelling for their homeless thought,  
 And, starting at the ghosts which to and fro  
 Glide o'er its dim and gloomy strand, had brought  
 The worship thence which they each other taught.  
 Well might men loathe their life, well might they turn  
 Even to the ills again from which they sought

Such refuge after death !—well might they learn  
To gaze on this fair world with hopeless unconcern !

## VIII

For they all pined in bondage ; body and soul,  
Tyrant and slave, victim and torturer, bent  
Before one Power, to which supreme control  
Over their will by their own weakness lent,  
Made all its many names omnipotent ;  
All symbols of things evil, all divine ;  
And hymns of blood or mockery, which rent  
The air from all its fanes, did intertwine  
Imposture's impious toils round each discordant shrine.

## IX

I heard, as all have heard, life's various story,  
And in no careless heart transcribed the tale ;  
But, from the sneers of men who had grown hoary  
In shame and scorn, from groans of crowds made pale  
By famine, from a mother's desolate wail  
O'er her polluted child, from innocent blood  
Poured on the earth, and brows anxious and pale  
With the heart's warfare ; did I gather food  
To feed my many thoughts :—a tameless multitude.

## X

I wandered through the wrecks of days departed  
Far by the desolated shore, when even  
O'er the still sea and jagged islets darted  
The light of moonrise ; in the northern Heaven,  
Among the clouds near the horizon driven,  
The mountains lay beneath one planet pale ;  
Around me broken tombs and columns riven  
Looked vast in twilight, and the sorrowing gale  
Waked in those ruins grey its everlasting wail !

## XI

I knew not who had framed these wonders then,  
Nor had I heard the story of their deeds ;  
But dwellings of a race of mightier men,  
And monuments of less ungentle creeds  
Tell their own tale to him who wisely heeds  
The language which they speak ; and now, to me  
The moonlight making pale the blooming weeds,  
The bright stars shining in the breathless sea,  
Interpreted those scrolls of mortal mystery.

## XII

Such man has been, and such may yet become !  
Ay, wiser, greater, gentler, even than they  
Who on the fragments of yon shattered dome  
Have stamped the sign of power—I felt the sway  
Of the vast stream of ages bear away  
My floating thoughts—my heart beat loud and fast—  
Even as a storm let loose beneath the ray  
Of the still moon, my spirit onward past  
Beneath truth's steady beams upon its tumult cast.

## XIII

It shall be thus no more ! too long, too long,  
 Sons of the glorious dead ! have ye lain bound  
 In darkness and in ruin—Hope is strong,  
 Justice and Truth their winged child have found—  
 Awake ! arise ! until the mighty sound  
 Of your career shall scatter in its gust  
 The thrones of the oppressor, and the ground  
 Hide the last altar's unregarded dust,  
 Whose Idol has so long betrayed your impious trust.

## XIV

It must be so—I will arise and waken  
 The multitude, and like a sulphurous hill,  
 Which on a sudden from its snows had shaken  
 The swoon of ages, it shall burst, and fill  
 The world with cleansing fire ; it must, it will—  
 It may not be restrained !—and who shall stand—  
 Amid the rocking earthquake steadfast still,  
 But Laon ? on high Freedom's desert land  
 A tower whose marble walls the leagued storms withstand !

## XV

One summer night, in commune with the hope  
 Thus deeply fed, amid those ruins grey  
 I watched beneath the dark sky's starry cope ;  
 And ever from that hour upon me lay  
 The burthen of this hope, and night or day,  
 In vision or in dream, clove to my breast :  
 Among mankind, or when gone far away  
 To the lone shores and mountains, 'twas a guest,  
 Which followed where I fled, and watched when I did rest.

## XVI

These hopes found words through which my spirit sought  
 To weave a bondage of such sympathy  
 As might create some response to the thought  
 Which ruled me now—and as the vapours lie  
 Bright in the outspread morning's radiancy,  
 So were these thoughts invested with the light  
 Of language ; and all bosoms made reply  
 On which its lustre streamed, whene'er it might  
 Thro' darkness wide and deep those tranced spirits smite.

## XVII

Yes, many an eye with dizzy tears was dim,  
 And oft I thought to clasp my own heart's brother,  
 When I could feel the listener's senses, swim,  
 And hear his breath its own swift gaspings smother  
 Even as my words evoked them—and another,  
 And yet another, I did fondly deem,  
 Felt that we all were sons of one great mother ;  
 And the cold truth such sad reverse did seem,  
 As to awake in grief from some delightful dream.

## XVIII

Yes, oft beside the ruined labyrinth  
 Which skirts the hoary caves of the green deep,

Did Laon and his friend on one grey plinth,  
 Round whose worn base the wild waves hiss and leap,  
 Resting at eve, a lofty converse keep :  
 And that his friend was false, may now be said  
 Calmly—that he like other men could weep.  
 Tears which are lies, and could betray and spread  
 Snares for that guileless heart which for his own had bled.

## XIX

Then, had no great aim recompensed my sorrow,  
 I must have sought dark respite from its stress—  
 In dreamless rest, in sleep that sees no morrow—  
 For to tread life's dismaying wilderness  
 Without one smile to cheer, one voice to bless,  
 Amid the snares and scoffs of human kind,  
 Is hard—but I betrayed it not, nor less  
 With love that scorned return, sought to unbind  
 The interwoven clouds which make its wisdom blind.

## XX

With deathless minds, which leave where they have past  
 A path of light, my soul communion knew ;  
 Till from that glorious intercourse, at last,  
 As from a mine of magic store, I drew  
 Words which were weapons ;—round my heart there grew  
 The adamantine armour of their power,  
 And from my fancy wings of golden hue  
 Sprang forth—yet not alone from wisdom's tower,  
 A minister of truth,—these plumes young Laon bore.

## XXI

An orphan with my parents lived, whose eyes  
 Were lodestars of delight, which drew me home  
 When I might wander forth ; nor did I prize  
 Aught human thing beneath Heaven's mighty dome  
 Beyond this child : so when sad hours were come,  
 And baffled hope like ice still clung to me,  
 Since kin were cold, and friends had now become  
 Heartless and false, I turned from all to be,  
 Cythna, the only source of tears and smiles to thee.

## XXII

What wert thou then ? A child most infantine,  
 Yet wandering far beyond that innocent age  
 In all but its sweet looks and mien divine ;  
 Even then, methought, with the world's tyrant rage  
 A patient warfare thy young heart did wage,  
 When those soft eyes of scarcely conscious thought,  
 Some tale, or thine own fancies, would engage  
 To overflow with tears, or converse fraught  
 With passion, o'er their depths its fleeting light had wrought.

## XXIII

She moved upon this earth a shape of brightness,  
 A power, that from its objects scarcely drew  
 One impulse of her being—in her lightness  
 Most like some radiant cloud of morning dew

Which wanders through the waste air's pathless blue,  
To nourish some far desert ; she did seem  
Beside me, gathering beauty as she grew,  
Like the bright shade of some immortal dream  
Which walks, when tempest sleeps, the wave of life's dark stream.

## XXIV

As mine own shadow was this child to me,  
A second self, far dearer and more fair ;  
Which clothed in undissolving radiancy  
All those steep paths which languor and despair  
Of human things had made so dark and bare,  
But which I trod alone—nor, till bereft  
Of friends, and overcome by lonely care,  
Knew I what solace for that loss was left,  
Though by a bitter wound my trusting heart was cleft.

## XXV

Once she was dear, now she was all I had  
To love in human life—this playmate sweet,  
This child of twelve years old—so she was made  
My sole associate, and her willing feet  
Wandered with mine where earth and ocean meet,  
Beyond the aerial mountains whose vast cells  
The unrepining billows ever beat,  
Through forests wide and old, and lawny dells,  
Where boughs of incense droop over the emerald wells.

## XXVI

And warm and light I felt her clasping hand  
When twined in mine : she followed where I went,  
Through the lone paths of our immortal land.  
It had no waste, but some memorial lent  
Which strung me to my toil—some monument  
Vital with mind : then Cythna by my side,  
Until the bright and beaming day were spent,  
Would rest, with looks entreating to abide,  
Too earnest and too sweet ever to be denied.

## XXVII

And soon I could not have refused her—thus  
For ever, day and night, we two were ne'er  
Parted, but when brief sleep divided us :  
And, when the pauses of the lulling air  
Of noon beside the sea had made a lair  
For her soothed senses, in my arms she slept,  
And I kept watch over her slumbers there,  
While, as the shifting visions over her swept,  
Amid her innocent rest by turns she smiled and wept.

## XXVIII

And, in the murmur of her dreams, was heard  
Sometimes the name of Laon :—suddenly  
She would arise, and, like the secret bird  
Whom sunset wakens, fill the shore and sky  
With her sweet accents—a wild melody !  
Hymns which my soul had woven to Freedom, strong  
The source of passion, whence they rose to be



- Triumphant strains, which, like a spirit's tongue,  
To the enchanted waves that child of glory sung.

## XXIX

Her white arms lifted through the shadowy stream  
Of her loose hair—oh, excellently great  
Seemed to me then my purpose, the vast theme  
Of those impassioned songs, when Cythna sate  
Amid the calm which rapture doth create  
After its tumult, her heart vibrating,  
Her spirit o'er the ocean's floating state  
From her deep eyes far wandering, on the wing  
Of visions that were mine, beyond its utmost spring.

## XXX

For, before Cythna loved it, had my song  
Peopled with thoughts the boundless universe,  
A mighty congregation, which were strong  
Where'er they trod the darkness to disperse  
The cloud of that unutterable curse  
Which clings upon mankind :—all things became  
Slaves to my holy and heroic verse,  
Earth, sea, and sky, the planets, life, and fame,  
And fate, or whate'er else binds the world's wondrous frame.

## XXXI

And this beloved child thus felt the sway  
Of my conceptions, gathering like a cloud  
The very wind on which it rolls away :  
Hers too were all my thoughts, ere yet, endowed  
With music and with light, their fountains flowed  
In poesy ; and her still and earnest face,  
Pallid with feelings which intensely glowed  
Within, was turned on mine with speechless grace,  
Watching the hopes which there her heart had learned to trace.

## XXXII

In me, communion with this purest being  
Kindled intenser zeal, and made me wise  
In knowledge, which in hers mine own mind seeing,  
Left in the human world few mysteries :  
How without fear of evil or disguise  
Was Cythna !—what a spirit strong and mild,  
Which death, or pain, or peril, could despise,  
Yet melt in tenderness ! what genius wild,  
Yet mighty, was enclosed within one simple child !

## XXXIII

New lore was this—old age with its grey hair,  
And wrinkled legends of unworthy things,  
And icy sneers, is nought ; it cannot dare  
To burst the chains which life for ever flings  
On the entangled soul's aspiring wings,  
So is it cold and cruel, and is made  
The careless slave of that dark power which brings  
Evil, like blight on man, who, still betrayed,  
Laughs o'er the grave in which his living hopes are laid.

## THE REVOLT OF ISLAM

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### XXXIV

• Nor are the strong and the severe to keep  
The empire of the world : thus Cythna taught  
Even in the visions of her eloquent sleep,  
Unconscious of the power through which she wrought  
• The woof of such intelligible thought,  
As from the tranquil strength which cradled lay  
In her smile-peopled rest, my spirit sought  
Why the deceiver and the slave has sway  
O'er heralds so divine of truth's arising day.

### XXXV

• Within that fairest form, the female mind  
Untainted by the poison clouds which rest  
On the dark world, a sacred home did find :  
But else, from the wide earth's maternal breast,  
Victorious Evil, which had dispossessed  
All native power, had those fair children torn,  
And made them slaves to soothe his vile unrest,  
And minister to lust its joys forlorn,  
Till they had learned to breathe the atmosphere of scorn.

### XXXVI

This misery was but coldly felt, till she  
Became my only friend, who had induced  
My purpose with a wider sympathy ;  
Thus, Cythna mourned with me the servitude  
In which the half of humankind were mewed,  
Victims of lust and hate, the slaves of slaves :  
She mourned that grace and power were thrown as food  
To the hyæna lust, who, among graves,  
Over his loathed meal, laughing in agony, raves.

### XXXVII

And I, still gazing on that glorious child,  
Even as these thoughts flushed o'er her :—" Cythna sweet,  
Well with the world art thou unreconciled ;  
Never will peace and human nature meet,  
Till free and equal man and woman greet  
Domestic peace ; and ere this power can make  
In human hearts its calm and holy seat,  
This slavery must be broken "—as I spake  
From Cythna's eyes a light of exultation brake.

### XXXVIII

She replied earnestly :—" It shall be mine,  
This task, mine, Laon !—thou hast much to gain ;  
Nor wilt thou at poor Cythna's pride repine,  
If she should lead a happy female train  
To meet thee over the rejoicing plain,  
When myriads at thy call shall throng around  
The Golden City."—Then the child did strain  
My arm upon her tremulous heart, and wound  
Her own about my neck, till some reply she found.

### XXXIX

• I smiled, and spake not.—" Wherefore dost thou smile  
At what I say ? I aon, I am not weak,

And, though my cheek might become pale the while,  
 With thee, if thou desirest, will I seek  
 Through their array of branded slaves to wreak  
 Ruin upon the tyrants. I had thought  
 It was more hard to turn my unpractised cheek  
 To scorn and shame, and this beloved spot  
 And thee, O dearest friend, to leave and murmur not.

## XL

" Whence came I what I am ? Thou, Laon, knowest  
 How a young child should thus undaunted be ;  
 Methinks, it is a power which thou bestowest,  
 Through which I seek, by most resembling thee,  
 So to become most good, and great, and free ;  
 Yet far beyond this Ocean's utmost roar  
 In towers and huts are many like to me,  
 Who, could they see thine eyes, or feel such lore  
 As I have learnt from them, like me would fear no more.

## XLI

" Thinkest thou that I shall speak unskilfully,  
 And none will heed me ? I remember now,  
 How once, a slave in tortures doomed to die,  
 Was saved, because in accents sweet and low  
 He sang a song his Judge loved long ago,  
 As he was led to death.—All shall relent  
 Who hear me—tears as mine have flowed, shall flow,  
 Hearts beat as mine now beats, with such intent  
 As renovates the world ; a will omnipotent !

## XLII

" Yes, I will tread Pride's golden palaces,  
 Through Penury's roofless huts and squalid cells  
 Will I descend, where'er in abjectness  
 Woman with some vile slave her tyrant dwells,  
 There with the music of thine own sweet spells  
 Will disenchant the captives, and will pour  
 For the despairing, from the crystal wells  
 Of thy deep spirit, reason's mighty lore,  
 And power shall then abound, and hope arise once more.

## XLIII

" Can man be free if woman be a slave ?  
 Chain one who lives, and breathes this boundless air  
 To the corruption of a closed grave !  
 Can they whose mates are beasts, condemned to bear  
 Scorn, heavier far than toil or anguish, dare  
 To trample their oppressors ? In their home  
 Among their babes, thou knowest a curse would wear  
 The shape of woman—hoary crime would come  
 Behind, and fraud rebuild religion's tottering dome.

## XLIV

" I am a child :—I would not yet depart.  
 When I go forth alone, bearing the lamp  
 Aloft which thou hast kindled in my heart,  
 Millions of slaves from many a dungeon damp

Shall leap in joy, as the benumbing cramp  
Of ages leaves their limbs—no ill may harm  
Thy Cythna ever—truth its radiant stamp  
Has fixed, as an invulnerable charm,  
Upon her children's brow, dark falsehood to disarm.

## XLV

"Wait yet awhile for the appointed day—  
Thou wilt depart, and I with tears shall stand  
Watching thy dim sail skirt the ocean grey;  
Amid the dwellers of this lonely land  
I shall remain alone—and thy command  
Shall then dissolve the world's unquiet trance,  
And, multitudinous as the desert sand  
Borne on the storm, its millions shall advance,  
Thronging round thee, the light of their deliverance.

## XLVI

"Then, like the forests of some pathless mountain,  
Which from remotest glens two warring winds  
Involve in fire, which not the loosened fountain  
Of broadest floods might quench, shall all the kinds  
Of evil catch from our uniting minds  
The spark which must consume them;—Cythna then  
Will have cast off the impotence that binds  
Her childhood now, and through the paths of men  
Will pass, as the charmed bird that haunts the serpent's den.

## XLVII

"We part!—O Laon, I must dare, nor tremble,  
To meet those looks no more!—Oh, heavy stroke!  
Sweet brother of my soul; can I dissemble  
The agony of this thought?"—As thus she spoke  
The gathered sobs her quivering accents broke,  
And in my arms she hid her beating breast.  
I remained still for tears—sudden she woke  
As one awakes from sleep, and wildly prest  
My bosom, her whole frame impetuously possest.

## XLVIII

"We part to meet again—but yon blue waste,  
Yon desert wide and deep, holds no recess  
Within whose happy silence, thus embraced  
We might survive all ills in one caress:  
Nor doth the grave—I fear 'tis passionless—  
Nor yon cold vacant Heaven:—we meet again  
Within the minds of men, whose lips shall bless  
Our memory, and whose hopes its light retain  
When these dissevered bones are trodden in the plain."

## XLIX

I could not speak, though she had ceased, for now  
The fountains of her feeling, swift and deep,  
Seemed to suspend the tumult of their flow;  
So we arose, and by the starlight steep  
Went homeward—neither did we speak nor weep,

But pale, were calm.—With passion thus subdued,  
 Like evening shades that o'er the mountains creep,  
 We moved towards our home ; where, in this mood,  
 Each from the other sought refuge in solitude.

## CANTO III

## I

WHAT thoughts had sway o'er Cythna's lonely slumber  
 That night, I know not ; but my own did seem  
 As if they might ten thousand years outnumber  
 Of waking life, the visions of a dream,  
 Which hid in one dim gulf the troubled stream  
 Of mind ; a boundless chaos wild and vast,  
 Whose limits yet were never memory's theme :  
 And I lay struggling as its whirlwinds past,  
 Sometimes for rapture sick, sometimes for pain aghast.

## II

Two hours, whose mighty circle did embrace  
 More time than might make grey the infant world,  
 Rolled thus, a weary and tumultuous space :  
 When the third came, like mist on breezes curled,  
 From my dim sleep a shadow was unfurled :  
 Methought, upon the threshold of a cave  
 I sate with Cythna ; drooping briony, pearled  
 With dew from the wild streamlet's shattered wave,  
 Hung, where we sate, to taste the joys which Nature gave.

## III

We lived a day as we were wont to live,  
 But nature had a robe of glory on,  
 And the bright air o'er every shape did weave  
 Intenser hues, so that the herbless stone,  
 The leafless bough among the leaves alone,  
 Had being clearer than its own could be,  
 And Cythna's pure and radiant self was shown  
 In this strange vision, so divine to me,  
 That if I loved before, now love was agony.

## IV

Morn fled, noon came, evening, then night descended,  
 And we prolonged calm talk beneath the sphere  
 Of the calm moon—when, suddenly was blended  
 With our repose a nameless sense of fear ;  
 And from the cave behind I seemed to hear  
 Sounds gathering upwards !—accents incomplete,  
 And stifled shrieks,—and now, more near and near,  
 A tumult and a rush of thronging feet  
 The cavern's secret depths beneath the earth did beat.

## V

The scene was changed, and away, away, away !  
 Through the air and over the sea we sped,  
 And Cythna in my sheltering bosom lay,  
 And the winds bore me ;—through the darkness spread  
 Around, the gaping earth then vomited

Legions of foul and ghastly shapes, which hung  
 Upon my flight ; and ever as we fled,  
 They plucked at Cythna—soon to me then clung  
 A sense of actual things those monstrous dreams among.

## VI

And I lay struggling in the impotence  
 Of sleep, while outward life had burst its bound,  
 Though, still deluded, strove the tortured sense  
 To its dire wanderings to adapt the sound  
 Which in the light of morn was poured around  
 • Our dwelling—breathless, pale, and unaware  
 I rose, and all the cottage crowded found  
 With armed men, whose glittering swords were bare,  
 And whose degraded limbs the tyrant's garb did wear.

## VII

And ere with rapid lips and gathered brow  
 I could demand the cause—a feeble shriek—  
 It was a feeble shriek, faint, far, and low,  
 Arrested me—my mien grew calm and meek,  
 And, grasping a small knife, I went to seek  
 That voice among the crowd—'twas Cythna's cry !  
 Beneath most calm resolve hid agony wreak  
 Its whirlwind rage :—so I past quietly  
 Till I beheld, where bound, that dearest child did lie.

## VIII

• I started to behold her, for delight  
 And exultation, and a joyance free,  
 Solemn, serene, and lofty, filled the light  
 Of the calm smile with which she looked on me :  
 So that I feared some brainless ecstasy,  
 Wrought from that bitter woe, had wildered her—  
 " Farewell ! farewell ! " she said, as I drew nigh.  
 " At first my peace was marred by this strange stir,  
 Now I am calm as truth—its chosen minister.

## IX

" Look not so, Laon—say farewell in hope :  
 These bloody men are but the slaves who bear  
 Their mistress to her task—it was my scope  
 The slavery where they drag me now, to share,  
 And among captives willing chains to wear  
 Awhile—the rest thou knowest—return, dear friend !  
 Let our first triumph trample the despair  
 Which would ensnare us now, for in the end,  
 In victory or in death our hopes and tears must blend."

## X

These words had fallen on my unheeding ear,  
 Whilst I had watched the motions of the crew  
 With seeming careless glance ; not many were  
 Around her, for their comrades just withdrew  
 To guard some other victim—so I drew  
 My knife, and with one impulse, suddenly  
 All unaware three of their number slew,

And grasped a fourth by the throat, and with loud cry  
My countrymen invoked to death or liberty !

## XI

What followed then, I know not—for a stroke  
On my raised arm and naked head came down,  
Filling my eyes with blood—when I awoke,  
I felt that they had bound me in my swoon,  
And up a rock which overhangs the town,  
By the steep path were bearing me : below  
The plain was filled with slaughter,—overthrown  
The vineyards and the harvests, and the glow  
Of blazing roofs shone far o'er the white Ocean's flow.

## XII

Upon that rock a mighty column stood,  
Whose capital seemed sculptured in the sky,  
Which to the wanderers o'er the solitude  
Of distant seas, from ages long gone by,  
Had many a landmark ; o'er its height to fly  
Scarcely the cloud, the vulture, or the blast,  
Has power—and when the shades of evening lie  
On Earth and Ocean, its carved summits cast  
The sunken daylight far through the aerial waste.

## XIII

They bore me to a cavern in the hill  
Beneath that column, and unbound me there :  
And one did strip me stark ; and one did fill  
A vessel from the putrid pool ; one bare  
A lighted torch, and four with friendless care  
Guided my steps the cavern paths along,  
Then up a steep and dark and narrow stair  
We wound, until the torches' fiery tongue  
Amid the gushing day beamless and pallid hung.

## XIV

They raised me to the platform of the pile,  
That column's dizzy height :—the grate of brass  
Through which they thrust me, open stood the while,  
As to its ponderous and suspended mass,  
With chains which eat into the flesh, alas !  
With brazen links, my naked limbs they bound  
The grate, as they departed to repass,  
With horrid clangour fell, and the far sound  
Of their retiring steps in the dense gloom was drowned.

## XV

The noon was calm and bright :—around that column  
The overhanging sky and circling sea  
Spread forth in silentness profound and solemn  
The darkness of brief frenzy cast on me,  
So that I knew not my own misery :  
The islands and the mountains in the day  
Like clouds reposed afar ; and I could see  
The town among the woods below that lay,  
And the dark rocks which bound the bright and glassy bay.

## XVI

It was so calm, that scarce the feathery weed  
 Sown by some eagle on the topmost stone  
 Swayed in the air :—so bright, that noon did breed  
 No shadow in the sky beside mine own—  
 Mine, and the shadow of my chain alone.  
 Below the smoke of roofs involved in flame  
 Rested like night, all else was clearly shown  
 In the broad glare, yet sound to me none came,  
 But of the living blood that ran within my frame.

## XVII

The peace of madness fled, and ah, too soon !  
 A ship was lying on the sunny main ;  
 Its sails were flapping in the breathless noon—  
 Its shadow lay beyond—that sight again  
 Waked, with its presence, in my tranced brain  
 The stings of a known sorrow, keen and cold :  
 I knew that ship bore Cythna o'er the plain  
 Of waters, to her blighting slavery sold,  
 And watched it with such thoughts as must remain untold.

## XVIII

I watched, until the shades of evening wrapt  
 Earth like an exhalation—then the bark  
 Moved, for that calm was by the sunset snapt.  
 It moved a speck upon the Ocean dark :  
 Soon the wan stars came forth, and I could mark  
 Its path no more ! I sought to close mine eyes,  
 But, like the balls, their lids were stiff and stark ;  
 I would have risen, but, ere that I could rise,  
 My parched skin was split with piercing agonies.

## XIX

I gnawed my brazen chain, and sought to sever  
 Its adamantine links, that I might die :  
 O Liberty ! forgive the base endeavour,  
 Forgive me, if, reserved for victory,  
 The champion of thy faith e'er sought to fly.—  
 That starry night, with its clear silence, sent  
 Tameless resolve which laughed at misery  
 Into my soul—linked remembrance lent  
 To that such power, to me such a severe content.

## XX

To breathe, to be, to hope, or to despair  
 And die, I questioned not ; nor, though the sun  
 Its shafts of agony kindling through the air  
 Moved over me, nor though in evening dun,  
 Or when the stars their visible courses run,  
 Or morning, the wide universe was spread  
 In dreary calmness round me, did I shun  
 Its presence, nor seek refuge with the dead  
 From one faint hope whose flower a dropping poison shed.

## XXI

Two days thus past—I neither raved nor died—  
 Thirst raged within me, like a scorpion's nest



Built in mine entrails ; I had spurred aside  
 The water-vessel, while despair possest  
 My thoughts, and now no drop remained ! The uprest  
 Of the third sun brought hunger—but the crust  
 Which had been left, was to my craving breast  
 Fuel, not food. I chewed the bitter dust,  
 And bit my bloodless arm, and licked the brazen rust.

## XXII

My brain began to fail when the fourth morn  
 Burst o'er the golden isles—a fearful sleep,  
 Which through the caverns dreary and forlorn  
 Of the riven soul, sent its foul dreams to sweep  
 With whirlwind swiftness—a fall far and deep,—  
 A gulf, a void, a sense of senselessness—  
 These things dwelt in me, even as shadows keep  
 Their watch in some dim charnel's loneliness,  
 A shoreless sea, a sky sunless and planetless !

## XXIII

The forms which peopled this terrific trance  
 I well remember—like a quire of devils,  
 Around me they involved a giddy dance ;  
 Legions seemed gathering from the misty levels  
 Of ocean, to supply those ceaseless revels,  
 Foul, ceaseless shadows :—thought could not divide  
 The actual world from these entangling evils,  
 Which so bemocked themselves, that I descried  
 All shapes like mine own self, hideously multiplied.

## XXIV

The sense of day and night, of false and true,  
 Was dead within me. Yet two visions burst  
 That darkness—one, as since that hour I knew,  
 Was not a phantom of the realms accurst,  
 Where then my spirit dwelt—but of the first  
 I know not yet, was it a dream or no.  
 But both, though not distincter, were immersed  
 In hues which, when through memory's waste they flow,  
 Make their divided streams more bright and rapid now.

## XXV

Methought that grate was lifted, and the seven  
 Who brought me thither, four stiff corpses bare,  
 And from the frieze to the four winds of Heaven  
 Hung them on high by the entangled hair ;  
 Swarthy were three—the fourth was very fair :  
 As they retired, the golden moon upsprung,  
 And eagerly, out in the giddy air,  
 Leaning that I might eat, I stretched and clung  
 Over the shapeless depth in which those corpses hung.

## XXVI

A woman's shape, now lank and cold and blue,  
 The dwelling of the many-coloured worm,  
 Hung there, the white and hollow cheek I drew  
 To my dry lips—what radiance did inform

Those horny eyes ? whose was that withered form ?  
 Alas, alas ! it seemed that Cythna's ghost  
 Laughed in those looks, and that the flesh was warm  
 Within my teeth !—a whirlwind keen as frost  
 Then in its sinking gulfs my sickening spirit tost.

## XXVII

Then seemed it that a tameless hurricane  
 Arose, and bore me in its dark career  
 Beyond the sun, beyond the stars that wane  
 On the verge of formless space—it languished there,  
 And, dying, left a silence lone and drear,  
 More horrible than famine :—in the deep  
 The shape of an old man did then appear,  
 Stately and beautiful ; that dreadful sleep  
 His heavenly smiles dispersed, and I could wake and weep.

## XXVIII

And, when the blinding tears had fallen, I saw  
 That column, and those corpses, and the moon,  
 And felt the poisonous tooth of hunger gnaw  
 My vitals, I rejoiced, as if the boon  
 Of senseless death would be accorded soon ;—  
 When from that stony gloom a voice arose,  
 Solemn and sweet as when low winds attune  
 The midnight pines ; the grate did then uncloze,  
 And on that reverend form the moonlight did repose.

## XXIX

He struck my chains, and gently spake and smiled :  
 As they were loosened by that Hermit old,  
 Mine eyes were of their madness half beguiled  
 To answer those kind looks.—He did enfold  
 His giant arms around me to uphold  
 My wretched frame, my scorched limbs he wound  
 In linen moist and balmy, and as cold  
 As dew to drooping leaves :—the chain, with sound  
 Like earthquake, through the chasm of that steep stair did bound,

## XXX

As, lifting me, it fell !—What next I heard,  
 Were billows leaping on the harbour bar,  
 And the shrill sea-wind, whose breath idly stirred  
 My hair ;—I looked abroad, and saw a star  
 Shining beside a sail and distant far  
 That mountain and its column, the known mark  
 Of those who in the wide deep wandering are,  
 So that I feared some Spirit, fell and dark,  
 In trance had lain me thus within a fiendish bark.

## XXXI

For now, indeed, over the salt sea billow  
 I sailed : yet dared not look upon the shape  
 Of him who ruled the helm, although the pillow  
 For my light head was hollowed in his lap,  
 And my bare limbs his mantle did enwrap,

Fearing it was a fiend : at last, he bent  
 O'er me his aged face ; as if to snap  
 Those dreadful thoughts the gentle grandsire bent  
 And to my inmost soul his soothing looks he sent.

## XXXII

A soft and healing potion to my lips  
 At intervals he raised—now looked on high,  
 To mark if yet the starry giant dips  
 His zone in the dim sea—now cheeringly,  
 Though he said little, did he speak to me.  
 " It is a friend beside thee—take good cheer,  
 Poor victim, thou art now at liberty ! "  
 I joyed as those a human tone to hear,  
 Who in cells deep and lone have languished many a year.

## XXXIII

A dim and feeble joy, whose glimpses oft  
 Were quenched in a relapse of wildering dreams,  
 Yet still methought we sailed, until aloft  
 The stars of night grew pallid, and the beams  
 Of morn descended on the ocean streams,  
 And still that aged man, so grand and mild,  
 Tended me, yet even as some sick mother seems  
 To hang in hope over a dying child,  
 Till in the azure East darkness again was piled.

## XXXIV

And then the night wind, steaming from the shore,  
 Sent odours dying sweet across the sea,  
 And the swift boat the little waves which bore,  
 Were cut by its keen keel, though slantingly ;  
 Soon I could hear the leaves sigh, and could see  
 The myrtle blossoms starring the dim grove,  
 As past the pebbly beach the boat did flee  
 On sidelong wing into a silent cove,  
 Where ebon pines a shade under the starlight wove.

## CANTO IV

## I

THE old man took the oars, and soon the bark  
 Smote on the beach beside a tower of stone ;  
 It was a crumbling heap whose portal dark  
 With blooming ivy trails was overgrown ;  
 Upon whose floor the spangling sands were strown,  
 And rarest sea-shells, which the eternal flood,  
 Slave to the mother of the months, had thrown  
 Within the walls of that great tower, which stood  
 A changeling of man's art, nursed amid Nature's brood.

## II

When the old man his boat had anchored,  
 He wound me in his arms with tender care,  
 And very few but kindly words he said,  
 And bore me through the tower adown a stair,  
 Whose smooth descent some ceaseless step to wear

For many a year had fallen.—We came at last  
To a small chamber, which with mosses rare  
Was tapestried, where me his soft hands placed  
Upon a couch of grass and oak-leaves interlaced.

## III

The moon was darting through the lattices  
Its yellow light, warm as the beams of day—  
So warm, that to admit the dewy breeze,  
The old man opened them; the moonlight lay  
Upon a lake whose waters wove their play  
Even to the threshold of that lonely home :  
Within was seen in the dim wavering ray,  
The antique sculptured roof, and many a tome  
Whose lore had made that sage all that he had become.

## IV

The rock-built barrier of the sea was past,—  
And I was on the margin of a lake,  
A lonely lake, amid the forests vast  
And snowy mountains :—did my spirit wake  
From sleep, as many-coloured as the snake  
That girds eternity ? in life and truth,  
Might not my heart its cravings ever slake ?  
Was Cythna then a dream, and all my youth,  
And all its hopes and fears, and all its joy and rath ?

## V

Thus madness came again,—a milder madness,  
Which darkened nought but time's unquiet fow  
With supernatural shades of clinging sadness ;  
That gentle Hermit, in my helpless woe,  
By my sick couch was busy to and fro,  
Like a strong spirit ministrant of good :  
When I was healed, he led me forth to show  
The wonders of his sylvan solitude,  
And we together sate by that isle-fretted flood.

## VI

He knew his soothing words to weave with skill  
From all my madness told : like mine own heart,  
Of Cythna would he question me, until  
That thrilling name had ceased to make me start,  
From his familiar lips—it was not art,  
Of wisdom and of justice when he spoke—  
When 'mid soft looks of pity, there would dart  
A glance as keen as is the lightning stroke  
When it doth give the knots of some ancestral oak.

## VII

Thus slowly from my brain the darkness rolled,  
My thoughts their due array did re-assume  
Through the enchantments of that Hermit old ;  
Then I bethought me of the glorious doom  
Of those who sternly struggle to relume  
The lamp of Hope o'er man's bewildered lot,  
And, sitting by the waters in the gloom

Of eve, to that friend's heart I told my thought—  
That heart which had grown old, but had corrupted not.

## VIII

That hoary man had spent his livelong age,  
In converse with the dead, who leave the stamp  
Of ever-burning thoughts on many a page,  
When they are gone into the senseless damp  
Of graves!—his spirit thus became a lamp  
Of splendour, like to those on which it fed.  
Through peopled haunts, the City and the Camp,  
Deep thirst for knowledge had his footsteps led,  
And all the ways of men among mankind he read.

## IX

But custom maketh blind and obdurate  
The loftiest hearts :—he had beheld the woe  
In which mankind was bound, but deemed that fate  
Which made them abject would preserve them so ;  
And in such faith, some steadfast joy to know,  
He sought this cell ; but, when fame went abroad  
That one in Argolis did undergo  
Torture for liberty, and that the crowd  
High truths from gifted lips had heard and understood,

## X

And that the multitude was gathering wide,  
His spirit leaped within his aged frame ;  
In lonely peace he could no more abide,  
But to the land on which the victor's flame  
Had fed, my native land, the Hermit came ;  
Each heart was there a shield, and every tongue  
Was as a sword of truth—young Laon's name  
Rallied their secret hopes, though tyrants sung  
Hymns of triumphant joy our scattered tribes among.

## XI

He came to the lone column on the rock,  
And with his sweet and mighty eloquence  
The hearts of those who watched it did unlock,  
And made them melt in tears of penitence.  
They gave him entrance free to bear me thence.  
“ Since this,” the old man said, “ seven years are spent  
While slowly truth on thy benighted sense  
Has crept ; the hope which wildered it has lent,  
Meanwhile, to me the power of a sublime intent.

## XII

“ Yes, from the records of my youthful state,  
And from the lore of bards and sages old,  
From whatsoe'er my wakened thoughts create  
Out of the hopes of thine aspirings bold,  
Have I collected language to unfold  
Truth to my countrymen ; from shore to shore  
Doctrines of human power my words have told :  
They have been heard, and men aspire to more  
Than they have ever gained or ever lost of more

## XIII

" In secret chambers parents read, and weep,  
 My writings to their babes, no longer blind ;  
 And young men gather when their tyrants sleep,  
 And vows of faith each to the other bind ;  
 And marriageable maidens, who have pined  
 With love, till life seemed melting through their loek,  
 A warmer zeal, a nobler hope now find ;  
 And every bosom thus is wrapt and shook,  
 Like autumn's myriad leaves in one swoln mountain brook.

## XIV

" The tyrants of the Golden City tremble  
 At voices which are heard about the streets ;  
 The ministers of fraud can scarce dissemble  
 The lies of their own heart ; but when one meets  
 Another at the shrine, he inly weets,  
 Though he says nothing, that the truth is known :  
 Murderers are pale upon the judgment-seats,  
 And gold grows vile even to the wealthy crone,  
 And laughter fills the Fane, and curses shake the Throne.

## XV

" Kind thoughts, and mighty hopes, and gentle deeds  
 Abound, for fearless love, and the pure law  
 Of mild equality and peace succeeds  
 To faiths which long have held the world in awe,  
 Bloody, and false, and cold :—as whirlpools draw  
 All wrecks of Ocean to their chasm, the sway  
 Of thy strong genius, Laon, which foresaw  
 This hope, compels all spirits to obey,  
 Which round thy secret strength now throng in wide array.

## XVI

" For I have been thy passive instrument—  
 (As thus the old man spake, his countenance  
 Gleamed on me like a spirit's)—thou hast lent  
 To me, to all, the power to advance  
 Towards this unforeseen deliverance  
 From our ancestral chains—ay, thou didst rear  
 That lamp of hope on high, which time, nor chance,  
 Nor change may not extinguish, and my share  
 Of good was o'er the world its gathered beams to bear."

## XVII

" But I, alas ! am both unknown and old,  
 And though the woof of wisdom I know well  
 To dye in hues of language, I am cold  
 In seeming, and the hopes which inly dwell  
 My manners note that I did long repel ;  
 But Laon's name to the tumultuous throng  
 Were like the star whose beams the waves compel  
 And tempests, and his soul-subduing tongue  
 Were as a lance to quell the mailed crest of wrong.

## XVIII

" Perchance blood need not flow, if thou at length  
 Wouldst rise ; perchance the very slaves would spare

Their brethren and themselves ; great is the strength  
 Of words—for lately did a maiden fair,  
 Who from her childhood has been taught to bear  
 The tyrant's heaviest yoke, arise, and make  
 Her sex the law of truth and freedom hear ;  
 And with these quiet words—' for thine own sake  
 I prithee spare me,—did with ruth so take

## XIX

" All hearts, that even the torturer, who had bound  
 Her meek calm frame, ere it was yet impaled,  
 Loosened her weeping then ; nor could be found  
 One human hand to harm her—unassailed  
 Therefore she walks through the great City, veiled  
 In virtue's adamantinè eloquence,  
 'Gainst scorn, and death, and pain, thus trebly mailed,  
 And blending in the smiles of that defence,  
 The Serpent and the Dove, Wisdom and Innocence.

## XX

" The wild-eyed women throng around her path :  
 From their luxurious dungeons, from the dust  
 Of meaner thralls, from the oppressor's wrath,  
 Or the caresses of his sated Just,  
 They congregate :—in her they put their trust ;  
 The tyrants send their armed slaves to quell  
 Her power ; they, even like a thunder gust  
 Caught by some forest, bend beneath the spell  
 Of that young maiden's speech, and to their chiefs rebel.

## XXI

" Thus she doth equal laws and justice teach  
 To woman, outraged and polluted long ;  
 Gathering the sweetest fruit in human reach  
 For those fair hands now free, while armed wrong  
 Trembles before her look, though it be strong ;  
 Thousands thus dwell beside her, virgins bright,  
 And matrons with their babes, a stately throng !  
 Lovers renew the vows which they did plight  
 In early faith, and hearts long parted now unite.

## XXII

" And homeless orphans find a home near her,  
 And those poor victims of the proud, no less,  
 Fair wrecks, on whom the smiling world with stir,  
 Thrusts the redemption of its wickedness :—  
 In squalid huts, and in its palaces  
 Sits Lust alone, while o'er the land is borne  
 Her voice, whose awful sweetness doth repress  
 All evil, and her foes relenting turn,  
 And cast the vote of love in hope's abandoned urn.

## XXIII

" So in the populous City, a young maiden  
 Has baffled Havoc of the prey which he  
 Marks as his own, whence'er with chains o'erladen  
 Men make them arms to hurl down tyranny,

False arbiter between the bound and free ;  
 And o'er the land, in hamlets and in towns  
 The multitudes collect tumultuously,  
 And throng in arms ; but tyranny disowns  
 Their claim, and gathers strength around its trembling thrones.

## XXIV

" Blood soon, although unwillingly, to shed  
 The free cannot forbear—the Queen of Slaves,  
 The hood-winked Angel of the blind and dead,  
 Custom, with iron mace points to the graves  
 Where her own standard desolately waves  
 Over the dust of Prophets and of Kings.  
 Many yet stand in her array—' she paves  
 Her path with human hearts,' and o'er it flings  
 The wildering gloom of her immeasurable wing.

## XXV

" There is a plain beneath the City's wall,  
 Bounded by misty mountains, wide and vast ;  
 Millions there lift at Freedom's thrilling call  
 Ten thousand standards wide ; they load the blast  
 Which bears one sound of many voices past,  
 And startles on his throne their sceptred foe  
 He sits amid his idle pomp aghast,  
 And that his power hath past away, doth know—  
 Why pause the victor swords to seal his overthrow ?

## XXVI

" The tyrant's guards resistance yet maintain :  
 Fearless, and fierce, and hard as beasts of blood  
 They stand a speck amid the peopled plain ;  
 Carnage and ruin have been made their food  
 From infancy—ill has become their good,  
 And for its hateful sake their will has wove  
 The chains which eat their hearts—the multitude  
 Surrounding them, with words of human love,  
 Seek from their own decay their stubborn minds to move.

## XXVII

" Over the land is felt a sudden pause,  
 As night and day those ruthless bands around  
 The watch of love is kept : —a trance which awes  
 The thoughts of men with hope—as when the sound  
 Of whirlwind, whose fierce blasts the waves and clouds confound,  
 Dies suddenly, the mariner in fear  
 Feels silence sink upon his heart—thus bound,  
 The conqueror's pause, and oh ! may freemen ne'er  
 Clasp the relentless knees of Dread, the murderer !

## XXVIII

" If blood be shed, 'tis but a change and choice  
 Of bonds,—from slavery to cowardice,  
 A wretched fall !—uplift thy charmed voice,  
 Pour on those evil men the love that lies  
 Hovering within those spirit-soothing eyes—



Arise, my friend, farewell !"—As thus he spake,  
 From the green earth lightly I did arise,  
 As one out of dim dreams that doth awake,  
 And looked upon the depth of that reposing lake.

## XXIX

I saw my countenance reflected there ;—  
 And then my youth fell on me like a wind  
 Descending on still waters—my thin hair  
 Was prematurely grey, my face was lined  
 With channels, such as suffering leaves behind,  
 Not age ; my brow was pale, but in my cheek  
 And lips a flush of gnawing fire did find  
 Their food and dwelling ; though mine eyes might speak  
 A subtle mind and strong within a frame thus weak.

## XXX

And though their lustre now was spent and faded,  
 Yet in my hollow looks and withered mien  
 The likeness of a shape for which was braided  
 The brightest woof of genius, still was seen—  
 One who, methought, had gone from the world's scene,  
 And left it vacant—'twas her lover's face—  
 It might resemble her—it once had been  
 The mirror of her thoughts, and still the grace  
 Which her mind's shadow cast, left there a lingering trace.

## XXXI

What then was I ? She slumbered with the dead.  
 Glory and joy and peace, had come and gone.  
 Doth the cloud perish, when the beams are fled  
 Which steeped its skirts in gold ? or dark, and lone,  
 Doth it not through the paths of night unknown,  
 On outspread wings of its own wind upborne  
 Pour rain upon the earth ? the stars are shown,  
 When the cold moon sharpens her silver horn  
 Under the sea, and make the wide night not forlorn.

## XXXII

Strengthened in heart, yet sad, that aged man  
 I left with interchange of looks and tears,  
 And lingering speech, and to the Camp began  
 My way. O'er many a mountain chain which rears  
 Its hundred crests aloft, my spirit bears  
 My frame ; o'er many a dale and many a moor,  
 And gaily now me seems serene earth wears  
 The bloomy spring's star-bright investiture,  
 A vision which aught sad from sadness might allure.

## XXXIII

My powers revived within me, and I went  
 As one whom winds waft o'er the bending grass,  
 Through many a vale of that broad continent.  
 At night when I reposed, fair dreams did pass  
 Before my pillow ; my own Cythna was  
 Not like a child of death, among them ever ;  
 When I arose from rest, a woeful mass

That gentlest sleep seemed from my life to sever,  
As of the light of youth were not withdrawn for ever.

## XXXIV

Aye, as I went, that maiden who had reared  
The torch of Truth afar, of whose high deeds  
The Hermit in his pilgrimage had heard,  
Haunted my thoughts.—Ah, Hope its sickness feeds  
With whatsoe'er it finds, or flowers or weeds!  
Could she be Cythna?—Was that corpse a shade  
Such as self-torturing thought from madness breeds?  
Why was this hope not torture? yet it made  
A light around my steps which would not ever fade.

## CANTO V

## I

OVER the utmost hill at length I sped,  
A snowy steep—the moon was hanging low  
Over the Asian mountains and outspread  
The plain, the City, and the Camp, below,  
Skirted the midnight Ocean's glimmering flow,  
The City's moon-lit spires and myriad lamps,  
Like stars in a sublunar sky did glow,  
And fires blazed far amid the scattered camps,  
Like springs of flame, which burst where'er swift Earthquake stamps

## II

All slept but those in watchful arms who stood,  
And those who sate tending the beacon's light,  
And the few sounds from that vast multitude  
Made silence more profound—Oh, what a might  
Of human thought was cradled in that night!  
How many hearts impenetrably veiled  
Beat underneath its shade, what secret fight  
Evil and good, in woven passions mailed,  
Waged through that silent throng, a war that never failed!

## III

And now the Power of Good held victory,  
So, through the labyrinth of many a tent,  
Among the silent millions who did lie  
In innocent sleep, exultingly I went;  
The moon had left Heaven desert now, but lent  
From eastern morn the first faint lustre showed  
An armed youth—over his spear he bent  
His downward face.—“A friend!” I cried aloud,  
And quickly common hopes made freer understood.

## IV

I sate beside him while the morning beam  
Crept slowly over Heaven, and talked with him  
Of those immortal hopes, a glorious theme!  
Which led us forth, until the stars grew dim:  
And all the while, methought, his voice did swim,  
As if it drowned in remembrance were  
Of thoughts which make the moist eyes overbrim:

At last, when daylight 'gan to fill the air,  
He looked on me, and cried in wonder, "Thou art here!"

## V

Then, suddenly, I knew it was the youth  
In whom its earliest hopes my spirit found;  
But envious tongues had stained his spotless truth,  
And thoughtless pride his love in silence bound,  
And shame and sorrow mine in toils had wound,  
Whilst he was innocent, and I deluded.  
The truth now came upon me, on the ground  
Tears of repenting joy, which fast intruded,  
Fell fast, and o'er its peace our mingling spirits brooded.

## VI

Thus, while with rapid lips and earnest eyes  
We talked, a sound of sweeping conflict spread,  
As from the earth did suddenly arise;  
From every tent, roused by that clamour dread,  
Our bands outsprung and seized their arms; we sped  
Towards the sound: our tribes were gathering far,  
Those sanguine slaves amid ten thousand dead  
Stabbed in their sleep, trampled in treacherous war,  
The gentle hearts whose power their lives had sought to spare.

## VII

Like rabid snakes, that sting some gentle child  
Who brings them food, when winter false and fair  
Allures them forth with its cold smiles, so wild  
They rage among the camp;—they overbear  
The patriot host—confusion, then despair  
Descends like night—when "Laon!" one did cry;  
Like a bright ghost from heaven, that shout did scare  
The slaves, and, widening through the vaulted sky,  
Seemed sent from Earth to Heaven in sign of victory.

## VIII

In sudden panic those false murderers fled,  
Like insect tribes before the northern gale:  
But, swifter still, our hosts encompassed  
Their shattered ranks, and in a craggy vale,  
Where even their fierce despair might nought avail,  
Hemmed them around!—and then revenge and fear  
Made the high virtue of the patriots fail:  
One pointed on his foe the mortal spear—  
I rushed before its point, and cried, "Forbear, for Lear!"

## IX

The spear transfixed my arm that was uplifted  
In swift expostulation, and the blood  
Gushed round its point: I smiled, and—"Oh! thou gifted  
With eloquence which shall not be withstood,  
Flow thus!"—I cried in joy, "thou vital flood,  
Until my heart be dry, ere thus the cause  
For which thou wert aught worthy be subdued—  
Ah, ye are pale,—ye weep,—your passions pause, —  
'Tis well! ye feel the truth of love's benignant laws,

## X

"Soldiers, our brethren and our friends are slain.  
 Ye murdered them, I think, as they did sleep!  
 Alas, what have ye done? The slightest pain  
 Which ye might suffer, there were eyes to weep;  
 But ye have quenched them—there were smiles to steep  
 Your hearts in balm, but they are lost in woe;  
 And those whom love did set his watch to keep  
 Around your tents truth's freedom to bestow,  
 Ye stabbed as they did sleep—but they forgive ye now.

## XI

"O wherefore should ill ever flow from ill,  
 And pain still keener pain for ever breed?  
 We all are brethren—even the slaves who kill  
 For hire, are men; and to avenge misdeed  
 On the misdoer, doth but Misery feed  
 With her own broken heart! O Earth, O Heaven!  
 And thou, dread Nature, which to every deed  
 And all that lives, or is to be, hath given,  
 Even as to thee have these done ill, and are forgiven.

## XII

"Join then your hands and hearts, and let the past  
 Be as a grave which gives not up its dead  
 To evil thoughts."—A film then overcast  
 My sense with dimness, for the wound, which bled  
 Freshly, swift shadows o'er mine eyes had shed.  
 When I awoke, I lay 'mid friends and foes,  
 And earnest countenances on me shed  
 The light of questioning looks, whilst one did close  
 My wound with balmiest herbs, and soothed me to repose;

## XIII

And one, whose spear had pierced me, leaned beside  
 With quivering lips and humid eyes;—and all  
 Seemed like some brothers on a journey wide  
 Gone forth, whom now strange meeting did befall  
 In a strange land, round one whom they might call  
 Their friend, their chief, their father, for assay  
 Of peril, which had saved them from the thrall  
 Of death, now suffering. Thus the vast array  
 Of those fraternal bands were reconciled that day.

## XIV

Lifting the thunder of their acclamation  
 Towards the City, then the multitude,  
 And I among them, went in joy—a nation  
 Made free by love;—a mighty brotherhood  
 Linked by a jealous interchange of good;  
 A glorious pageant, more magnificent  
 Than kingly slaves, arrayed in gold and blood;  
 When they return from carnage, and are sent  
 In triumph bright beneath the populous battlement.

## XV

Afar, the City walls were thronged on high,  
 And myriads on each giddy turret clung,

And to each spire far lessening in the sky,  
 Bright pennons on the idle winds were hung ;  
 As we approached, a shout of joyance sprung  
 At once from all the crowd, as if the vast  
 And peopled Earth its boundless skies among  
 The sudden clamour of delight had cast,  
 When from before its face some general wreck had past.

## XVI

Our armies through the City's hundred gates  
 Were poured, like brooks which to the rocky lair  
 Of some deep lake, whose silence them awaits,  
 Throng from the mountains when the storms are there :  
 And, as we passed through the calm sunny air,  
 A thousand flower-inwoven crowns were shed,  
 The token flowers of truth and freedom fair,  
 And fairest hands bound them on many a head,  
 Those angels of love's heaven, that over all was spread.

## XVII

I trod as one tranced in some rapturous vision :  
 Those bloody bands so lately reconciled,  
 Were, ever as they went, by the contrition  
 Of anger turned to love from ill beguiled,  
 And every one on them more gently smiled,  
 Because they had done evil —the sweet awe  
 Of such mild looks made their own hearts grow mild,  
 And did with soft attraction ever draw  
 Their spirits to the love of freedom's equal law.

## XVIII

And they, and all, in one loud symphony  
 My name with Liberty commingling, lifted,  
 " The friend and the preserver of the free !"  
 The parent of this joy ! " and fair eyes, gifted  
 With feelings caught from one who had uplifted  
 The light of a great spirit, round me shone,  
 And all the shapes of this grand scenery shifted  
 Like restless clouds before the steadfast sun,—  
 Where was that Maid ? I asked, but it was known of none.

## XIX

Laone was the name her love had chosen,  
 For she was nameless, and her birth none knew :  
 Where was Laone now ?—The words were frozen  
 Within my lips with fear, but to subdue  
 Such dreadful hope, to my great task was due,  
 And when at length one brought reply, that she  
 To-morrow would appear, I then withdrew  
 To judge what need for that great throng might be,  
 For now the stars came thick over the twilight sea.

## XX

Yet need was none for rest or food to care,  
 Even though that multitude was passing great,  
 Since each one for the other did prepare  
 All kindly succour.—Therefore to the gate

Of the Imperial House, now desolate,  
 I passed, and there was found aghast, alone,  
 The fallen Tyrant!—Silently he sate  
 Upon the footstool of his golden throne,  
 Which, starfed with sunny gems, in its own lustre shone.

## XXI

Alone, but for one child, who led before him  
 A graceful dance: the only living thing  
 Of all the crowd, which thither to adore him  
 Flocked yesterday, who solace sought to bring  
 'In his abandonment!—She knew the King  
 Had praised her dance of yore, and now she wove  
 Its circles, aye weeping and murmuring  
 'Mid her sad task of unregarded love,  
 That to no smiles it might his speechless sadness move.

## XXII

She fled to him, and wildly clasped his feet  
 When human steps were heard:—he moved nor spoke,  
 Nor changed his hue, nor raised his looks to meet  
 The gaze of strangers.—Our loud entrance woke  
 The echoes of the hall, which circling broke  
 The calm of its recesses,—like a tomb  
 Its sculptured walls vacantly to the stroke  
 Of footfalls answered, and the twilight's gloom  
 Lay like a charnel's mist within the radiant dome.

## XXIII

The little child stood up when we came nigh;  
 Her lips and cheeks seemed very pale and wan,  
 But on her forehead and within her eye  
 Lay beauty, which makes hearts that feed thereon  
 Sick with excess of sweetness;—on the throne  
 She leaned. The King, with gathered brow and lips  
 Wreathed by long scorn, did inly sneer and frown  
 With hue like that when some great painter dips  
 His pencil in the gloom of earthquake and eclipse.

## XXIV

She stood beside him like a rainbow braided  
 Within some storm, when scarce its shadows vast  
 From the blue paths of the swift sun have faded.  
 A sweet and solemn smile, like Cythna's, cast  
 One moment's light, which made my heart beat fast  
 O'er that child's parted lips—a gleam of bliss,  
 A shade of vanished days,—as the tears past  
 Which wrapt it, even as with a father's kiss  
 I pressed those softest eyes in trembling tenderness.

## XXV

The sceptred wretch then from that solitude  
 I drew, and of his change compassionate,  
 With words of sadness soothed his rugged mood.  
 But he, while pride and fear held deep debate,  
 With sullen guise of ill dissembled hate

Glared on me as a toothless snake might glare :  
 Pity, not scorn, I felt, though desolate  
 The desolator now, and unaware  
 The curses which he mocked had caught him by the hair.

## XXVI

I led him forth from that which now might seem  
 A gorgeous grave : through portals sculptured deep  
 With imagery beautiful as dream  
 We went, and left the shades which tend on sleep  
 Over its unregarded gold to keep  
 Their silent watch.—The child trod faintly,  
 And, as she went, the tears which she did weep  
 Glanced in the starlight ; wildered seemed she,  
 And when I spake, for sobs she could not answer me.

## XXVII

At last the tyrant cried, " She hungers, slave !  
 Stab her, or give her bread ! "—It was a tone  
 Such as sick fancies in a new-made grave  
 Might hear. I trembled, for the truth was known,  
 He with this child had thus been left alone,  
 And neither had gone forth for food,—but he  
 In mingled pride and awe towered near his throne,  
 And she, a nursling of captivity,  
 Knew nought beyond those walls, nor what such change might be.

## XXVIII

And he was troubled at a charm withdrawn  
 Thus suddenly ; that sceptres ruled no more —  
 That even from gold the dreadful strength was gone  
 Which once made all things subject to its power—  
 Such wonder seized him, as if hour by hour  
 The past had come again ; and the swift fall  
 Of one so great and terrible of yore  
 To desolateness, in the hearts of all  
 Like wonder stirred, who saw such awful change befall.

## XXIX

A mighty crowd, such as the wide land pours  
 Once in a thousand years, now gathered round  
 The fallen tyrant ;—like the rush of showers  
 Of hail in spring, pattering along the ground,  
 Their many footsteps fell, else came no sound  
 From the wide multitude : that lonely man  
 Then knew the burthen of his change, and found,  
 Concealing in the dust his visage wan,  
 Refuge from the keen looks which thro' his bosom ran.

## XXX

And he was faint withal. I sate beside him  
 Upon the earth, and took that child so fair  
 From his weak arms, that ill might none betide him  
 Or her ;—when food was brought to them, her share  
 To his averted lips the child did bear ;  
 But when she saw he had enough, she ate  
 And wept the while ;—the lonely man's despair

Hunger then overcame, and of his state  
 Forgetful, on the dust as in a trance he sate.

## XXXI

Slowly the silence of the multitudes  
 Past, as when far is heard in some lone dell  
 The gathering of a wind among the woods—  
 And he is fallen ! they cry ; he who did dwell  
 Like famine or the plague, or aught more fell,  
 Among our homes, is fallen ! the murderer  
 Who slaked his thirsting soul as from a well  
 Of blood and tears with ruin ! He is here !  
 Sunk in a gulf of scorn from which none may him rear ;

## XXXII

Then was heard—He who judged let him be brought  
 To judgment ! Blood for blood cries from the soil  
 On which his crimes have deep pollution wrought !  
 Shall Othman only unavenged despoil ?  
 Shall they, who by the stress of grinding toil  
 Wrest from the unwilling earth his luxuries,  
 Perish for crime, while his foul blood may boil,  
 Or creep within his veins at will ?—Arise !  
 And to high justice make her chosen sacrifice.

## XXXIII

" What do ye seek ? what fear ye ? " then I cried,  
 Suddenly starting forth, " that ye should shed  
 The blood of Othman—if your hearts are tried  
 In the true love of freedom, cease to dread  
 This one poor lonely man—beneath Heaven shed  
 In purest light above us all, through earth,  
 Maternal earth, who doth her sweet smiles spread  
 For all, let him go free ; until the worth  
 Of human nature win from these a second birth.

## XXXIV

" What call ye *justice* ? Is there one who ne'er  
 In secret thought has wished another's ill ? —  
 Are ye all pure ? Let those stand forth who hear,  
 And tremble not. Shall they insult and kill,  
 If such they be ? their mild eyes can they fill  
 With the false anger of the hypocrite ?  
 Alas, such were not pure—the chastened will  
 Of virtue sees that justice is the light  
 Of love, and not revenge, and terror and despite."

## XXXV

The murmur of the people, slowly dying,  
 Paused as I spake ; then those who near me were,  
 Cast gentle looks where the lone man was lying  
 Shrouding his head, which now that infant fair  
 Clasped on her lap in silence ;—through the air  
 Sobs were then heard, and many kissed my feet  
 In pity's madness, and, to the despair  
 Of him whom late they cursed, a solace sweet  
 His very victims brought—soft looks and speeches meet.



## XXXVI

Then to a home, for his repose assigned,  
 Accompanied by the still throng he went  
 In silence, where, to soothe his rankling mind,  
 Some likeness of his ancient state was lent ;  
 And, if his heart could have been innocent  
 As those who pardoned him, he might have ended  
 His days in peace ; but his straight lips were bent,  
 Men said, into a smile which guile portended,  
 A sight with which that child like hope with fear was blended.

## XXXVII

'Twas midnight now, the eve of that great day,  
 Whereon the many nations at whose call  
 The chains of earth like mist melted away,  
 Decreed to hold a sacred Festival,  
 A rite to attest the equality of all  
 Who live. So to their homes, to dream or wake  
 All went. The sleepless silence did recall  
 Laone to my thoughts, with hopes that make  
 The flood recede from which their thirst they seek to slake.

## XXXVIII

The dawn flowed forth, and from its purple fountains  
 I drank those hopes which make the spirit quail,  
 As to the plain between the misty mountains  
 And the great City, with a countenance pale  
 I went —it was a sight which might avail  
 To make men weep exulting tears, for whom  
 Now first from human power the reverend veil  
 Was torn, to see Earth from her general womb  
 Pour forth her swarming sons to a fraternal doom ;

## XXXIX

To see, far glancing in the misty morning,  
 The signs of that innumerable host,  
 To hear one sound of many made, the warning  
 Of Earth to Heaven from its free children tost,  
 While the eternal hills, and the sea lost  
 In wavering light, and, starring the blue sky  
 The city's myriad spires of gold, almost  
 With human joy made mute society  
 Its witnesses with men who must hereafter be.

## XL

To see, like some vast island from the Ocean,  
 The Altar of the Federation rear  
 Its pile i' the midst ; a work, which the devotion  
 Of millions in one night created there,  
 Sudden, as when the moonrise makes appear  
 Strange clouds in the east ; a marble pyramid  
 Distinct with steps : that mighty shape did wear  
 The light of genius ; its still shadow hid  
 Far ships : to know its height the morning mists forbid :—

## XLI

To hear the restless multitudes for ever  
 Around the base of that great Altar flow,

As on some mountain islet burst and shiver  
 Atlantic waves ; and solemnly and slow  
 As the wind bore that tumult to and fro,  
 To feel the dreamlike music, which did swim  
 Like beams through floating clouds on waves below,  
 • Falling in pauses from that Altar dim  
 As silver-sounding tongues breathed an aërial hymn.

## XLII

To hear, to see, to live, was on that morn  
 Lethæan joy ! so that all those assembled  
 Cast off their memories of the past outworn :  
 Two only hosoms with their own life trembled,  
 And mine was one,—and we had both dissembled ;  
 So with a beating heart I went, and one,  
 Who having much, covets yet more, resembled ;  
 A lost and dear possession, which not won,  
 He walks in lonely gloom beneath the noonday sun.

## XLIII

To the great Pyramid I came : its stair  
 With female choirs was thronged : the loveliest  
 Among the free, grouped with its sculptures rare.  
 As I approached, the morning's golden mist,  
 Which now the wonder-stricken breezes kist  
 With their cold lips, fled, and the summit shone  
 Like Athos seen from Samothracia, drest  
 In earliest light by vintagers, and one  
 Sate there, a female shape upon an ivory throne.

## XLIV

A Form most like the imagined habitant  
 Of silver exhalations sprung from dawn,  
 By winds which feed on sunrise woven, to enchant  
 The faiths of men : all mortal eyes were drawn,  
 As famished mariners through strange seas gone,  
 Gaze on a burning watch-tower, by the light  
 Of those divinest lineaments—alone  
 With thoughts which none could share, from that fair sight  
 I turned in sickness, for a veil shrouded her countenance bright.

## XLV

And, neither did I hear the acclamations  
 Which, from brief silence bursting, filled the air,  
 With her strange name and mine, from all the nations  
 Which we, they said, in strength had gathered there  
 From the sleep of bondage ; nor the vision fair  
 Of that bright pageantry beheld,—but blind  
 And silent, as a breathing corpse did fare,  
 Leaning upon my friend, till, like a wind  
 To fevered cheeks, a voice flowed o'er my troubled mind.

## XLVI

Like music of some minstrel heavenly-gifted,  
 To one whom fiends enthrall, this voice to me ;  
 Scarce did I wish her veil to be uplifted,  
 I was so calm and joyous,—I could see

The platform where we stood, the statues three  
Which kept their marble watch on that high shrine,  
The multitudes, the mountains, and the sea;  
As when eclipse hath passed, things sudden shine  
To men's astonished eyes most clear and crystalline.

## XLVII

At first Laone spoke most tremulously:  
But soon her voice that calmness which it shed  
Gathered, and—"Thou art whom I sought to see  
And thou art our first votary here," she said:  
"I had a dear friend once, but he is dead!—  
And of all those on the wide earth who breathe,  
Thou dost resemble him alone—I spread  
This veil between us two, that thou beneath  
Shouldst image one who may have been long lost in death.

## XLVIII

"For this wilt thou not henceforth pardon me?  
Yes, but those joys which silence well requite  
Forbid reply: why men have chosen me  
To be the Priestess of this holiest rite  
I scarcely know, but that the floods of light  
Which flow over the world, have borne me hither  
To meet thee, long most dear; and now unite  
Thine hand with mine, and may all comfort wither  
From both the hearts whose pulse in joy now beats together.

## XLIX

"If our own will as others' law we bind,  
If the foul worship trampled here we fear;  
If as ourselves we cease to love our kind!"—  
She paused, and pointed upwards—sculptured there  
Three shapes around her ivory throne appear;  
One was a Giant, like a child asleep  
On a loose rock, whose grasp crushed, as it were  
In dream, sceptres and crowns; and one did keep  
Its watchful eyes in doubt whether to smile or weep;

## L

A Woman sitting on the sculptured disk  
Of the broad earth, and feeding from one breast  
A human babe and a young basilisk;  
Her looks were sweet as Heaven's when loveliest  
In Autumn eves.—The third Image was drest  
In white wings swift as clouds in winter skies.  
Beneath his feet, 'mongst ghastliest forms, repress  
Lay Faith, an obscene worm, who sought to rise,  
While calmly on the Surr he turned his diamond eyes.

## LI

Beside that Image then I sate, while she  
Stood, 'mid the throngs which ever ebb'd and flow'd  
Like light amid the shadows of the sea  
Cast from one cloudless star, and on the crowd  
That touch, which none who feels forgets, bestowed;

And whilst the sun returned the steadfast gaze  
Of the great Image as o'er Heaven it glode,  
That rite had place ; it ceased when sunset's blaze  
Burned o'er the isles ; all stood in joy and deep amaze ;

LII

When in the silence of all spirits there  
Laone's voice was felt, and through the air  
Her thrilling gestures spoke, most eloquently fair.

" Calm art thou as yon sunset ! swift and strong  
As new-fledged Eagles, beautiful and young,  
That float among the blinding beams of morning ;  
And underneath thy feet writhe Faith, and Folly,  
Custom, and Hell, and mortal Melancholy—  
Hark ! the Earth starts to hear the mighty warning  
Of thy voice sublime and holy ;  
Its free spirits here assembled,  
See thee, feel thee, know thee now :  
To thy voice their hearts have trembled,  
Like ten thousand clouds which flow  
With one wide wind as it flies !  
Wisdom ! thy irresistible children rise  
To hail thee, and the elements they chain  
And their own will to swell the glory of thy train.

2

" O Spirit vast and deep as Night and Heaven !  
Mother and soul of all to which is given  
The light of life, the loveliness of being,  
Lo ! thou dost re-ascend the human heart,  
Thy throne of power, almighty as thou wert,  
In dreams of Poets old grown pale by seeing  
The shade of thee :—now, millions start  
To feel thy lightnings through them burning :  
Nature, or God, or Love, or Pleasure,  
Or Sympathy, the sad tears turning  
To mutual smiles, a drainless treasure,  
Descends amidst us ;—Scorn and Hate,  
Revenge and Selfishness, are desolate—  
A hundred nations swear that there shall be  
Pity and Peace and Love, among the good and free !

3

" Eldest of things, divine Equality !  
Wisdom and Love are but the slaves of thee,  
The Angels of thy sway, who pour around thee  
Treasures from all the cells of human thought,  
And from the Stars, and from the Ocean brought,  
And the last living heart whose beatings bound thee.  
The powerful and the wise had sought  
Thy coming, thou in light descending  
O'er the wide land which is thine own,  
Like the spring whose breath is blending  
All blasts of fragrance into one,

Comest upon the paths of men !  
 Earth bares her general bosom to thy ken,  
 And all her children here in glory meet  
 To feed upon thy smiles, and clasp thy sacred feet.

4

" My brethren, we are free ! the plains and mountains,  
 The grey sea-shore, the forests, and the fountains,  
 Are haunts of happiest dwellers ; man and woman,  
 Their common bondage burst, may freely borrow  
 From lawless love a solace for their sorrow !  
 For oft we still must weep, since we are human.  
 A stormy night's serenest morrow,  
 Whose showers are pity's gentle tears,  
 Whose clouds are smiles of those that die  
 Like infants, without hopes or fears,  
 And whose beams are joys that lie  
 In blended hearts, now holds dominion ;  
 The dawn of mind, which, upwards on a pinion  
 Borne, swift as sunrise, far illumines space,  
 And clasps this barren world in its own bright embrace !

5

" My brethren, we are free ! the fruits are glowing  
 Beneath the stars, and the night winds are flowing  
 O'er the ripe corn, the birds and beasts are dreaming—  
 Never again may blood of bird or beast  
 Stain with its venomous stream a human feast,  
 To the pure skies in accusation steaming ;  
 Avenging poisons shall have ceased  
 To feed disease and fear and madness,  
 The dwellers of the earth and air  
 Shall throng around our steps in gladness,  
 Seeking their food or refuge there.  
 Our toil from thought all glorious forms shall cull,  
 To make this earth, our home, more beautiful,  
 And Science, and her sister Poesy,  
 Shall clothe in light the fields and cities of the free !

6

" Victory, Victory to the prostrate nations !  
 Bear witness, Night, and ye, mute Constellations,  
 Who gaze on us from your crystalline cars !  
 Thoughts have gone forth whose powers can sleep no more !  
 Victory ! Victory ! Earth's remotest shore,  
 Regions which groan beneath the Antarctic stars,  
 The green lands cradled in the roar  
 Of western waves, and wildernesses  
 Peopled and vast, which skirt the oceans  
 Where morning dyes her golden tresses,  
 Shall soon partake our high emotions .  
 Kings shall turn pale ! Almighty Fear,  
 The Fiend-God, when our charmed name he hear,  
 Shall fade like shadow from his thousand fanes,  
 While Truth with Joy enthroned o'er his lost empire reigns ! "

## LIII

Ere she had ceased, the mists of night entwining  
Their dim woof, floated o'er the infinite throng ;  
She like a spirit through the darkness shining,  
In tones whose sweetness silence did prolong,  
As if to lingering winds they did belong,  
Poured forth her inmost soul : a passionate speech  
With wild and thrilling pauses woven among,  
Which whoso heard was mute, for it could teach  
To rapture like her own all listening hearts to reach.

## LIV

Her voice was as a mountain stream which sweeps  
The withered leaves of Autumn to the lake,  
And in some deep and narrow bay then sleeps  
In the shadow of the shores ; as dead leaves wake  
Under the wave, in flowers and herbs which make  
Those green depths beautiful when skies are blue,  
The multitude so moveless did partake  
Such living change, and kindling murmurs flew  
As o'er that speechless calm delight and wonder grew.

## LV•

Over the plain the throngs were scattered then  
In groups around the fires, which from the sea  
Even to the gorge of the first mountain glen  
Blazed wide and far : the banquet of the free  
Was spread beneath many a dark cypress tree,  
Beneath whose spires, which swayed in the red light  
Reclining as they ate, of Liberty.  
And Hope, and Justice, and Laone's name,  
Earth's children did a woof of happy converse frame.

## LVI

Their feast was such as Earth, the general mother,  
Pours from her fairest bosom, when she smiles  
In the embrace of Autumn ;—to each other  
As when some parent fondly reconciles  
Her warring children, she their wrath beguiles  
With her own sustenance ; they relenting weep :  
Such was this Festival, which from their isles,  
And continents, and winds, and ocean's deep,  
All shapes might throng to share, that fly, or walk, or creep.

## LVII

Might share in peace and innocence, for gore  
Or poison none this festal did pollute,  
But piled on high, an overflowing store  
Of pomegranates, and citrons, fairest fruit,  
Melons and dates, and figs, and many a root  
Sweet and sustaining, and bright grapes ere yet  
Accursed fire their mild juice could transmute  
Into a mortal bane, and brown corn set  
In baskets ; with pure streams their thirsting lips they wet.

## LVIII

Laone had descended from the shrine,  
 And every deepest look and holiest mind  
 Fed on her form, though now those tones divine  
 Were silent as she past; she did unwind  
 Her veil, as with the crowds of her own kind  
 She mixed; some impulse made my heart refrain  
 From seeking her that night, so I reclined  
 Amidst a group, where on the utmost plain  
 A festal watch-fire burned beside the dusky main.

## LIX

And joyous was our feast; pathetic talk,  
 And wit, and harmony of choral strains,  
 While far Orion o'er the waves did walk  
 That flow among the isles, held us in chains  
 Of sweet captivity, which none disdains  
 Who feels; but, when his zone grew dim in mist  
 Which clothes the Ocean's bosom, o'er the plains  
 The multitudes went homeward, to their rest,  
 Which that delightful day with its own shadow blest.

## CANTO VI

## I

BESIDE the dimness of the glimmering sea,  
 Weaving swift language from impassioned themes,  
 With that dear friend I lingered, who to me  
 So late had been restored, beneath the gleams  
 Of the silver stars; and ever in soft dreams  
 Of future love and peace sweet converse lapt  
 Our willing fancies, till the pallid beams  
 Of the last watch-fire fell, and darkness wrapt  
 The waves, and each bright chain of floating fire was snapt.

## II

And till we came even to the City's wall  
 And the great gate, then, none knew whence or why,  
 Disquiet on the multitudes did fall:  
 And first, one pale and breathless past us by,  
 And stared and spoke not; then with piercing cry,  
 A troop of wild-eyed women, by the shrieks  
 Of their own terror driven,—tumultuously  
 Hither and thither hurrying with pale cheeks,  
 Each one from fear unknown a sudden refuge seeks—

## III

Then, rallying cries of treason and of danger  
 Resounded: and—"They come! to arms! to arms!  
 The Tyrant is amongst us, and the stranger  
 Comes to enslave us in his name! to arms!  
 In vain: for Panic, the pale fiend who charms  
 Strength to forswear her right, those millions swept.  
 Like waves before the tempest—these alarms  
 Came to me, as to know their cause I leapt  
 On the gate's turret, and in rage and grief and scorn, I wept!

## IV

For to the North I saw the town on fire,  
 And its red light made morning pallid now,  
 Which burst over wide Asia.—Louder, higher,  
 The yells of victory and the screams of woe  
 I heard approach, and saw the throng below  
 Stream through the gates like foam-wrought waterfalls  
 Fed from a thousand storms—the fearful glow  
 Of bombs flares overhead—at intervals  
 The red artillery's bolt mangling among them falls.

## V

And now the horsemen come—and all was done  
 Swifter than I have spoken—I beheld  
 Their red swords flash in the unrisen sun.  
 I rushed among the rout to have repelled  
 That miserable flight—one moment quelled  
 By voice, and looks, and eloquent despair,  
 As if reproach from their own hearts withheld  
 Their steps, they stood; but soon came pouring there  
 New multitudes, and did those rallied bands o'erbear.

## VI

I strove, as drifted on some cataract  
 By irresistible streams, some wretch might strive  
 Who hears its fatal roar the files compact  
 Whelmed me, and from the gate availed to drive  
 With quickening impulse, as each bolt did rive  
 Their ranks with bloodier chasm into the plain  
 Disgorged at length the dead and the alive,  
 In one dread mass, were parted, and the stain  
 Of blood from mortal steel fell o'er the fields like rain.

## VII

For now the despot's bloodhounds with their prey  
 Unarmed and unaware, were gorging deep  
 Their gluttony of death; the loose array  
 Of horsemen o'er the wide fields murdering sweep,  
 And with loud laughter for their tyrant reap  
 A harvest sown with other hopes; the while,  
 Far overhead, ships from Propontis keep  
 A killing rain of fire—when the waves smile  
 As sudden earthquakes light many a volcano isle.

## VIII

Thus sudden, unexpected feast was spread  
 For the carrion fowls of Heaven.—I saw the sight—  
 I moved—I lived—as o'er the heaps of dead,  
 Whose stony eyes glared in the morning light,  
 I trod; to me there came no thought of flight,  
 But with loud cries of scorn which whoso heard  
 That dreaded death, felt in his veins the might  
 Of virtuous shame return, the crowd I stirred,  
 And desperation's hope in many hearts recurred.

## IX

A band of brothers gathering round me, made,  
 Although unarmed, a steadfast front and still



Retreating, with stern looks beneath the shade  
 Of gathered eyebrows, did the victors fill  
 With doubt even in success; deliberate will  
 Inspired our growing troop; not overthrown  
 It gained the shelter of a grassy hill,  
 And ever still our comrades were hewn down,  
 And their defenceless limbs beneath our footsteps strown.

## X

Immovably we stood—in joy I found,  
 Beside me then, firm as a giant pine  
 Among the mountain vapours driven around,  
 The old man whom I loved—his eyes divine  
 With a mild look of courage answered mine,  
 And my young friend was near, and ardently  
 His hand grasped mine a moment—now the line  
 Of war extended, to our rallying cry,  
 As myriads flocked in love and brotherhood to die.

## XI

For ever while the sun was climbing Heaven  
 The horsemen hewed our unarmed myriads down  
 Safely, though when by thirst of carnage driven  
 Too near, those slaves were swiftly overthrown  
 By hundreds leaping on them: flesh and bone  
 Soon made our ghastly ramparts; then the shaft  
 Of the artillery from the sea was thrown  
 More fast and fiery, and the conquerors laughed  
 In pride to hear the wind our screams of torment waft.

## XII

For on one side alone the hill gave shelter,  
 So vast that phalanx of unconquered men,  
 And there the living in their blood did welter  
 Of the dead and dying, which, in that green glen,  
 Like stifled torrents, made a plashy fen  
 Under the feet—thus was the butchery waged  
 While the sun clomb Heaven's eastern steep—but when  
 It 'gan to sink, a fiercer combat raged,  
 For in more doubtful strife the armies were engaged.

## XIII

Within a cave upon the hill were found  
 A bundle of rude pikes, the instrument  
 Of those who war but on their native ground  
 For natural rights: a shout of joyance sent  
 Even from our hearts the wide air pierced and rent,  
 As those few arms the bravest and the best  
 Seized; and each sixth, thus armed, did now present  
 A line which covered and sustained the rest,  
 A confident phalanx, which the foes on every side invest.

## XIV

That onset turned the foes to flight almost;  
 But soon they saw their present strength, and knew  
 That coming night would to our resolute host

Bring victory ; so dismounting close they drew  
 Their glittering files, and then the combat grew  
 Unequal but most horrible ;—and ever  
 Our myriads, whom the swift bolt overthrew,  
 Or the red sword, failed like a mountain river  
 Which rushes forth in foam to sink in sands for ever.

## XV

Sorrow and shame, to see with their own kind  
 Our human brethren mix, like beasts of blood  
 To mutual ruin, armed by one behind,  
 Who sits and scoffs !—That friend so mild and good  
 Who like its shadow near my youth had stood,  
 Was stabbed !—my old preserver's hoary hair,  
 With the flesh clinging to its roots, was strewed  
 Under my feet ! I lost all sense or care,  
 And like the rest I grew desperate and unaware.

## XVI

The battle became ghastlier, in the midst  
 I paused, and saw, how ugly and how fell,  
 O Hate ! thou art, even when thy life thou shedd'st  
 For love. The ground in many a little dell  
 Was broken, up and down whose steepes befell  
 Alternate victory and defeat, and there  
 The combatants with rage most horrible  
 Strove, and their eyes started with cracking stare,  
 And impotent their tongues they lolled into the air,

## XVII

Flaccid and foamy, like a mad dog's hanging ;  
 Want, and Moon-madness, and the Pest's swift bane—  
 When its shafts smite—while yet its bow is twanging—  
 Have each their mark and sign—some ghastly stain ;  
 And this was thine, O War ! of hate and pain  
 Thou loathed slave. I saw all shapes of death,  
 And minister'd to many, o'er the plain  
 While carnage in the sunbeam's warmth did seethe  
 Till twilight o'er the east wove her sereneest wreath.

## XVIII

The few who yet survived, resolute and firm,  
 Around me fought. At the decline of day,  
 Winding above the mountain's snowy term,  
 New banners shone : they quivered in the ray  
 Of the sun's unseen orb—ere night the array  
 Of fresh troops hemmed us in—of those brave bands  
 I soon survived alone—and now I lay  
 Vanquished and faint, the grasp of bloody hands  
 I felt, and saw on high the glare of falling brands,

## XIX

When on my foes a sudden terror came,  
 And they fled, scattering.—Lo ! with reinless speed  
 A black Tartarian horse of giant frame  
 Comes trampling o'er the dead ; the living bleed  
 Beneath the hoofs of that tremendous steed

On which, like to an angel, robed in white,  
 Sate one waving a sword ; the hosts recede  
 And fly, as through their ranks, with awful might,  
 Sweeps in the shadow of eve that Phantom swift and bright ;

## XX

And its path made a solitude.—I rose  
 And marked its coming ; it relaxed its course  
 As it approached me, and the wind that flows  
 Through night, bore accents to mine ear whose force  
 Might create smiles in death.—The Tartar horse  
 Paused, and I saw the shape its might which swayed,  
 And heard her musical pants, like the sweet source  
 Of waters in the desert, as she said,  
 “ Mount with me, Laon, now ”—I rapidly obeyed.

## XXI

Then “ Away ! away ! ” she cried, and stretched her sword  
 As ’twere a scourge over the courser’s head,  
 And lightly shook the reins.—We spake no word,  
 But like the vapour of the tempest fled  
 Over the plain ; her dark hair was dispread,  
 Like the pine’s locks upon the lingering blast ;  
 Over mine eyes its shadowy strings it spread  
 Fitfully, and the hills and streams fled fast,  
 As o’er the glimmering forms the steed’s broad shadow past,

## XXII

And his hoofs ground the rocks to fire and dust,  
 His strong sides made the torrents rise in spray,  
 And turbulence, as if a whirlwind’s gust  
 Surrounded us ;—and still away ! away !  
 Through the desert night we sped, while she alway  
 Gazed on a mountain which we neared, whose crest  
 Crowned with a marble ruin, in the ray  
 Of the obscure stars gleamed ;—its rugged breast  
 The steed strained up, and then his impulse did arrest.

## XXIII

A rocky hill which overhung the Ocean :—  
 From that lone ruin, when the steed that panted  
 Paused, might be heard the murmur of the motion  
 Of waters, as in spots for ever haunted  
 By the choicest winds of Heaven, which are enchanted  
 To music by the wand of Solitude,  
 That wizard wild, and the far tents implanted  
 Upon the plain, be seen by those who stood  
 Thence marking the dark shore of Ocean’s curved flood.

## XXIV

One moment these were heard and seen—another  
 Past ; and the two who stood beneath that night  
 Each only heard, or saw, or felt, the other ;  
 As from the lofty steed she did alight,  
 Cythna (for, from the eyes whose deepest light  
 Of love and sadness made my lips feel pale  
 With influence strange of mournfullest delight,

My own sweet Cythna looked,) with joy did quail,  
And felt her strength in tears of human weakness fail.

## XXV

And for a space in my embrace she rested,  
Her head on my unquiet heart reposing,  
While my faint arms her languid frame invested :  
At length she looked on me, and half unclosing  
Her tremulous lips, said : " Friend, thy bands were losing  
The battle, as I stood before the King  
In bonds.—I burst them then, and swiftly choosing  
The time, did seize a Tartar's sword, and spring  
Upon his horse, and swift as on the whirlwind's wing,

## XXVI

" Have thou and I been borne beyond pursuer,  
And we are here."—Then, turning to the steed,  
She pressed the white moon on his front with pure  
And rose-like lips, and many a fragrant weed  
From the green ruin plucked, that he might feed ;—  
But I to a stone seat that Maiden led,  
And kissing her fair eyes, said, " Thou hast need  
Of rest," and I heaped up the courser's bed  
In a green mossy nook, with mountain flowers dispread.

## XXVII

Within that ruin, where a shattered portal  
Looks to the eastern stars, abandoned now  
By man, to be the home of things immortal,  
Memories, like awful ghosts which come and go,  
And must inherit all he builds below,  
When he is gone, a hall stood ; o'er whose roof  
Fair clinging weeds with ivy pale did grow,  
Clasping its grey rents with a verdurous woof,  
A hanging dome of leaves, a canopy moon-proof.

## XXVIII

The autumnal winds, as if spellbound, had made  
A natural couch of leaves in that recess,  
Which seasons none disturbed, but in the shade  
Of flowering parasites, did spring love to dress  
With their sweet blooms the wintry loneliness  
Of those dead leaves, shedding their stars, whene'er  
The wandering wind her nurslings might caress ;  
Whose intertwining fingers ever there,  
Made music wild and soft that filled the listening air.

## XXIX

We know not where we go, or what sweet dream  
May pilot us through caverns strange and fair  
Of far and pathless passion, while the stream  
Of life our bark doth on its whirlpools bear,  
Spreading swift wings as sails to the dim air :  
Nor should we seek to know, so the devotion  
Of love and gentle thoughts be heard still there  
Louder and louder from the utmost Ocean  
Of universal life, attuning its commotion.

## xxx

To the pure all things are pure ! Oblivion wrapt  
 Our spirits, and the fearful overthrow  
 Of public hope was from our being snapt,  
 Though linked years had bound it there ; for now  
 A power, a thirst, a knowledge, which below  
 All thoughts, like light beyond the atmosphere,  
 Clothing its clouds with grace, doth ever flow,  
 Came on us, as we sate in silence there,  
 Beneath the golden stars of the clear azure air.

## xxxI

In silence which doth follow talk that causes  
 The baffled heart to speak with sighs and tears,  
 When wildering passion swalloweth up the pauses  
 Of inexpressive speech :—the youthful years  
 Which we together past, their hopes and fears,  
 The blood itself which ran within our frames,  
 That likeness of the features which endears  
 The thoughts expressed by them, our very names,  
 And all the winged hours which speechless memory claims,

## xxxII

Had found a voice :—and ere that voice did pass,  
 The night grew damp and dim, and through a rent  
 Of the ruin where we sate, from the morass,  
 A wandering Meteor, by some wild wind sent,  
 Hung high in the green dome, to which it lent  
 A faint and pallid lustre ; while the song  
 Of blasts, in which its blue hair quivering bent,  
 Strewed strangest sounds the moving leaves among ;  
 A wondrous light, the sound as of a spirit's tongue.

## xxxIII

The Meteor showed the leaves on which we sate,  
 And Cythna's glowing arms, and the thick ties  
 Of her soft hair, which bent with gathered weight  
 My neck near hers, her dark and deepening eyes,  
 Which, as twin phantoms of one star that lies  
 O'er a dim well, move, though the star reposes,  
 Swam in our mute and liquid ecstasies,  
 Her marble brow, and eager lips, like roses,  
 With their own fragrance pale, which spring but half uncloses.

## xxxIV

The Meteor to its far morass returned :  
 The beating of our veins one interval  
 Made still ; and then I felt the blood that burned  
 Within her frame, mingle with mine, and fall  
 Around my heart like fire ; and over all  
 A mist was spread, the sickness of a deep  
 And speechless swoon of joy, as might befall  
 Two disunited spirits when they leap  
 In union from this earth's obscure and fading sleep,

## xxxv

Was it one moment that confounded thus  
 All thought, all sense, all feeling, into one

Unutterable power, which shielded us  
Even from our own cold looks, when we had gone  
Into a wide and wild oblivion  
Of tumult and of tenderness? or now  
Had ages, such as make the moon and sun,  
• The seasons and mankind, their changes know,  
Left fear and time unfelt by us alone below?

XXXVI

I know not. What are kisses whose fire clasps  
The failing heart in languishment, or limb  
Twined within limb? or the quick dying gasps  
Of the life meeting, when the faint eyes swim  
Through tears of a wide mist, boundless and dim,  
In one caress? What is the strong control  
Which leads the heart that dizzy steep to climb,  
Where far over the world those vapours roll,  
Which blend two restless frames in one reposing soul?

XXXVII

It is the shadow which doth float unseen,  
But not unfelt, o'er blind mortality,  
Whose divine darkness fled not from that green  
And lone recess, where lapt in peace did lie  
Our linked frames, till, from the changing sky,  
That night and still another day had fled;  
And then I saw and felt. The moon was high,  
And clouds, as of a coming storm, were spread  
Under its orb,—loud winds were gathering overhead.

XXXVIII

Cythna's sweet lips seemed lurid in the moon,  
Her fairest limbs with the night wind were chill,  
And her dark tresses were all loosely strewn  
O'er her pale bosom :—all within was still,  
And the sweet peace of joy did almost fill  
The depth of her unfathomable look ;—  
And we sate calmly, though that rocky hill,  
The waves contending in its caverns strook,  
For they foreknew the storm, and the grey ruin shook.

XXXIX

There we unheeding sate, in the communion  
Of interchanged vows, which, with a rite  
Of faith most sweet and sacred, stamped our union.—  
Few were the living hearts which could unite  
Like ours, or celebrate a bridal night  
With such close sympathies, for they had sprung  
From linked youth, and from the gentle might  
Of earliest love, delayed and cherished long,  
Which common hopes and fears made, like a tempest, strong.

XL

And such is Nature's law divine, that those  
Who grow together cannot choose but love,  
If faith or custom do not interpose,  
Or common slavery mar what else might move

All gentlest thoughts ; as in the sacred grove  
Which shades the springs of Æthiopian Nile,  
That living tree, which, if the arrowy dove,  
Strike with her shadow, shrinks in fear awhile,  
But its own kindred leaves clasps while the sunbeams smile

## XLI

And clings to them, when darkness may dis sever  
The close caresses of all duller plants  
Which bloom on the wide earth—thus we for ever  
Were linked, for love had nurst us in the haunts  
Where knowledge from its secret source enchants  
Young hearts with the fresh music of its springing,  
Ere yet its gathered flood feeds human wants,  
As the great Nile feeds Egypt ; ever flinging  
Light on the woven boughs which o'er its waves are swinging.

## XLII

The tones of Cythna's voice like echoes were  
Of those far murmuring streams ; they rose and fell,  
Mixed with mine own in the tempestuous air,—  
And so we sate, until our talk befel  
Of the late ruin, swift and horrible,  
And how those seeds of 'rope might yet be sown,  
Whose fruit is evil's mortal poison : well  
For us, this ruin made a watch-tower lone,  
But Cythna's eyes looked faint, and now two days were gone

## XLIII

Since she had food :—therefore I did awaken  
The Tartar steed, who, from his ebon mane,  
Soon as the clinging slumbers he had shaken,  
Bent his thin head to seek the brazen rein,  
Following me obediently ; with pain  
Of heart, so deep and dread, that one caress,  
When lips and heart refuse to part again,  
Till they have told their fill, could scarce express  
The anguish of her mute and fearful tenderness.

## XLIV

Cythna beheld me part, as I bestrode  
That willing steed—the tempest and the night  
Which gave my path its safety as I rode  
Down the ravine of rocks, did soon unite  
The darkness and the tumult of their might  
Borne on all winds.—Far through the streaming rain  
Floating at intervals the garments white  
Of Cythna gleamed, and her voice once again  
Came to me on the gust, and soon I reached the plain.

## XLV

I dreaded not the tempest, nor did he  
Who bore me, but his eyeballs wide and red  
Turned on the lightning's cleft exultingly ;  
And when the earth beneath his tameless tread,  
Shook with the sullen thunder, he would spread

His nostrils to the blast, and joyously  
Mock the fierce peal with neighings ;—thus we spee.  
O'er the lit plain, and soon I could descry  
Where Death and Fire had gorged the spoil of victory.

## XLVI

There was a desolate village in a wood,  
Whose bloom-inwoven leaves now scattering fed  
The hungry storm ; it was a place of blood,  
A heap of hearthless walls ;—the flames were dead  
Within those dwellings now,—the life had fled  
From all those corpses now,—but the wide sky  
Flooded with lightning was ribbed overhead  
By the black rafters, and around did lie  
Women, and babes, and men, slaughtered confusedly.

## XLVII

Beside the fountain in the market-place  
Dismounting, I beheld those corpses stare  
With horny eyes upon each other's face,  
And on the earth, and on the vacant air,  
And upon me, close to the waters where  
I stooped to slake my thirst ;—I shrank to taste,  
For the salt bitterness of blood was there !  
But tied the steed beside, and sought in haste  
If any yet survived amid that ghastly waste.

## XLVIII

No living thing was there beside one woman,  
Whom I found wandering in the streets, and she  
Was withered from a likeness of aught human  
Into a fiend, by some strange misery :  
Soon as she heard my steps, she leaped on me,  
And glued her burning lips to mine, and laughed  
With a loud, long, and frantic laugh of glee,  
And cried, " Now, Mortal, thou hast deeply quaffed  
The Plague's blue kisses—soon millions shall pledge the draught !

## XLIX

" My name is Pestilence—this bosom dry  
Once fed two babes—a sister and a brother—  
When I came home, one in the blood did lie  
Of three death-wounds—the flames had ate the other !  
Since then I have no longer been a mother,  
But I am Pestilence ;—hither and thither  
I flit about, that I may slay and smother ;—  
All lips which I have kissed must surely wither,  
But Death's—if thou art he, we'll go to work together !

## L

" What seekest thou here ? the moonlight comes in flashes,—  
The dew is rising dankly from the dell ;  
'Twill moisten her ! and thou shalt see the gashes  
In my sweet boy—now full of worms—but tell  
First what thou seek'st."—" I seek for food."—" 'Tis well,  
Thou shalt have food ; Famine, my paramour,  
Waits for us at the feast—cruel and fell



Is Famine, but he drives not from his door  
Those whom these lips have kissed, alone. No more, no more ! ”

## LI

As thus she spake, she grasped me with the strength  
Of madness, and by many a ruined hearth  
She led, and over many a corpse :—at length  
We came to a lone hut, where on the earth  
Which made its floor, she in her ghastly mirth  
Gathering from all those homes now desolate,  
Had piled three heaps of loaves, making a dearth  
Among the dead—round which she set in state  
A ring of cold, stiff babes ; silent and stark they sate.

## LII

She leaped upon a pile, and lifted high  
Her mad looks to the lightning, and cried : “ Eat !  
Share the great feast—to-morrow we must die ! ”  
And then she spurned the loaves with her pale feet,  
Towards her bloodless guests ;—that sight to meet,  
Mine eyes and my heart ached, and but that she  
Who loved me, did with absent looks defeat  
Despair, I might have raved in sympathy ;  
But now I took the food that woman offered me ;

## LIII

And vainly having with her madness striven  
If I might win her to return with me,  
Departed. In the eastern beams of Heaven  
The lightning now grew pallid—rapidly,  
As by the shore of the tempestuous sea  
The dark steed bore me, and the mountain grey  
Soon echoed to his hoofs, and I could see  
Cythna among the rocks, where she alway  
Had sate, with anxious eyes fixed on the lingering day.

## LIV

And joy was ours to meet : she was most pale,  
Famished, and wet and weary, so I cast  
My arms around her, lest her steps should fail  
As to our home we went, and thus embraced,  
Her full heart seemed a deeper joy to taste  
Than e'er the prosperous know ; the steed behind .  
Trod peacefully along the mountain waste :  
We reached our home ere morning could unbind  
Night's latest veil, and on our bridal couch reclined.

## LV

Her chilled heart having cherished in my bosom,  
And sweetest kisses past, we two did share  
Our peaceful meal :—as an autumnal blossom,  
Which spreads its shrunk leaves in the sunny air,  
After cold showers, like rainbows woven there,  
Thus in her lips and cheeks the vital spirit  
Mantled, and in her eyes, an atmosphere  
Of health, and hope ; and sorrow languished near it,  
And fear, and all that dark despondence doth inherit.

## CANTO VII

## I

So we sate joyous as the morning ray  
Which fed upon the wrecks of night and storm  
Now lingering on the winds; light airs did play  
Among the dewy weeds, the sun was warm,  
And we sate linked in the inwoven charm  
Of converse and caresses sweet and deep,  
Speechless caresses, talk that might disarm  
Time, though he wield the darts of death and sleep,  
And those thrice mortal barbs in his own poison steep.

## II

I told her of my sufferings and my madness,  
And how, awakened from that dreamy mood  
By Liberty's uprising, the strength of gladness  
Came to my spirit in my solitude;  
And all that now I was, while tears pursued  
Each other down her fair and listening cheek  
Fast as the thoughts which fed them, like a flood  
From sunbright dales; and when I ceased to speak,  
Her accents soft and sweet the pausing air did wake.

## III

She told me a strange tale of strange endurance,  
Like broken memories of many a heart  
Woven into one; to which no firm assurance,  
So wild were they, could her own faith impart.  
She said that not a tear did dare to start  
From the swollen brain, and that her thoughts were firm  
When from all mortal hope she did depart,  
Borne by those slaves across the Ocean's term,  
And that she reached the port without one fear infirm.

## IV

One was she among many there, the thralls  
Of the cold tyrant's cruel lust: and they  
Laughed mournfully in those polluted halls;  
But she was calm and sad, musing alway  
On loftiest enterprise, till on a day  
The tyrant heard her singing to her lute  
A wild and sad, and spirit-thrilling lay,  
Like winds that die in wastes—one moment mute  
The evil thoughts it made, which did his breast pollute.

## V

Even when he saw her wondrous loveliness,  
One moment to great Nature's sacred power  
He bent and was no longer passionless;  
But when he bade her to his secret bower  
Be borne a loveless victim, and she tore  
Her locks in agony, and her words of flame  
And mightier looks availed not; then he bore  
Again his load of slavery, and became  
A king, a heartless beast, a pageant and a name.

## VI

She told me what a loathsome agony  
 Is that when selfishness mocks love's delight,  
 Foul as in dreams most fearful imagery  
 To dally with the mowing dead—that night  
 All torture, fear, or horror, made seem light  
 Which the soul dreams or knows, and when the day  
 Shone on her awful frenzy, from the sight  
 Where like a Spirit in fleshy chains she lay  
 Struggling, aghast and pale the tyrant fled away.

## VII

Her madness was a beam of light, a power  
 Which dawned through the rent soul; and words it gave,  
 Gestures and looks, such as in whirlwinds bore  
 Which might not be withstood, whence none could save  
 All who approached their sphere, like some calm wave  
 Vexed into whirlpools by the chasms beneath;  
 And sympathy made each attendant slave  
 Fearless and free, and they began to breathe  
 Deep curses, like the voice of flames far underneath.

## VIII

The King felt pale upon his noon-day throne; .  
 At night two slaves he to her chamber sent,  
 One was a green and wrinkled eunuch, grown  
 From human shape into an instrument  
 Of all things ill—distorted, bowed and bent.  
 The other was a wretch from infancy  
 Made dumb by poison; who nought knew or meant  
 But to obey: from the fire-isles came he,  
 A diver lean and strong, of Oman's coral sea.

## IX

They bore her to a bark, and the swift stroke  
 Of silent rowers clove the blue moonlight seas,  
 Until upon their path the morning broke;  
 They anchored then, where, be there calm or breeze,  
 The gloomiest of the drear Symplegades  
 Shakes with the sleepless surge;—the Æthiop there  
 Wound his long arms around her, and with knees  
 Like iron clasped her feet, and plunged with her  
 Among the closing waves out of the boundless air.

## X

" Swift as an eagle stooping from the plain  
 Of morning light, into some shadowy wood,  
 He plunged through the green silence of the main,  
 Through many a cavern which the eternal flood  
 Had scooped, as dark lairs for its monster brood;  
 And among mighty shapes which fled in wonder,  
 And among mightier shadows which pursued  
 His heels, he wound: until the dark rocks under  
 He touched a golden chain—a sound arose like thunder

## XI

" A stunning clang of massive bolts redoubting  
 Beneath the deep—a burst of waters driven

As from the roots of the sea, raging and bubbling :  
And in that roof of crags a space was riven  
Thro' which there shone the emerald beams of heaven,  
Shot through the lines of many waves inwoven,  
Like sunlight through acacia woods at even,  
Through which, his way the diver having cloven,  
Past like a spark sent up out of a burning oven.

## XII

" And then," she said, " he laid me in a cave  
Above the waters, by that chasm of sea,  
A fountain round and vast, in which the wave  
Imprisoned, boiled and leaped perpetually,  
Down which, one moment resting, he did flee,  
Winning the adverse depth ; that spacious cell  
Like an hupaithric temple wide and high,  
Whose æry dome is inaccessible,  
Was pierced with one round cleft through which the sunbeams fell.

## XIII

" Below, the fountain's brink was richly paven  
With the deep wealth, coral, and pearl, and sand  
Like spangling gold, and purple shells engraven  
With mystic legends by no mortal hand,  
Left there, when, thronging to the moon's command,  
The gathering waves rent the Hesperian gate  
Of mountains, and on such bright floor did stand  
Columns, and shapes like statues, and the state  
Of kingless thrones, which Earth did in her heart create.

## XIV

" The fiend of madness which had made its prey  
Of my poor heart, was lulled to sleep awhile :  
There was an interval of many a day,  
And a sea-eagle brought me food the while,  
Whose nest was built in that untrodden isle,  
And who, to be the jailor, had been taught,  
Of that strange dungeon ; as a friend whose smile  
Like light and rest at morn and even is sought,  
That wild bird was to me, till madness misery brought.

## XV

" The misery of a madness slow and creeping,  
Which made the earth seem fire, the sea seem air,  
And the white clouds of noon which oft were sleeping  
In the blue heaven so beautiful and fair,  
Like hosts of ghastly shadows hovering there ;  
And the sea-eagle looked a fiend who bore  
Thy mangled limbs for food !—Thus all things were  
Transformed into the agony which I wore,  
Even as a poisoned robe around my bosom's core.

## XVI

" Again I knew the day and night fast fleeing,  
The eagle and the fountain and the air ;  
Another frenzy came—there seemed a being  
Within me—a strange load my heart did bear,

As if some living thing had made its lair  
 Even in the fountains of my life :—a long  
 And wondrous vision wrought from my despair,  
 Then grew, like sweet reality among  
 Dim visionary woes, an unreposing throng.

## XVII

"Methought I was about to be a mother—  
 Month after month went by, and still I dreamed  
 That we should soon be all to one another,  
 I and my child ; and still new pulses seemed  
 To beat beside my heart, and still I deemed  
 There was a babe within—and when the rain  
 Of winter through the rifted cavern streamed,  
 Methought, after a lapse of lingering pain,  
 I saw that lovely shape, which near my heart had lain.

## XVIII

It was a babe, beautiful from its birth,—  
 It was like thee, dear love ! its eyes were thine,  
 Its brow, its lips, and so upon the earth  
 It laid its fingers, as now rest on mine  
 Thine own, beloved !—'twas a dream divine ;  
 Even to remember how it fled, how swift,  
 How utterly, might make the heart repine,—  
 Though 'twas a dream."—Then Cythna did uplift  
 Her looks on mine, as if some doubt she sought to shift :

## XIX

A doubt which would not flee, a tenderness  
 Of questioning grief, a source of thronging tears  
 Which, having past, as one whom sobs oppress,  
 She spoke : " Yes, in the wilderness of years  
 Her memory, aye, like a green home appears.  
 She sucked her fill even at this breast, sweet love,  
 For many months I had no mortal fears ;  
 Methought I felt her lips and breath approve,—  
 It was a human thing which to my bosom clove.

## XX

" I watched the dawn of her first smiles, and soon  
 When zenith-stars were trembling on the wave,  
 Or when the beams of the invisible moon,  
 Or sun, from many a prism within the cave  
 Their gem-born shadows to the water gave,  
 Her looks would hunt them, and with outspread hand,  
 From the swift lights which might that fountain pave,  
 She would mark one, and laugh, when that command  
 Slighting, it lingered there, and could not understand.

## XXI

"Methought her looks began to talk with me :  
 And no articulate sounds, but something sweet  
 Her lips would frame,—so sweet it could not be,  
 That it was meaningless ; her touch would meet  
 Mine, and our pulses calmly flow and beat  
 In response while we slept ; and on a day  
 When I was happiest in that strange retreat,

With heaps of golden shells we two did play,—  
Both infants, weaving wings for time's perpetual way.

## XXII

" Ere night, methought, her waning eyes were grown  
• Weary with joy, and tired with our delight,  
We, on the earth, like sister twins lay down  
On one fair mother's bosom :—from that night  
She fled ;—like those illusions clear and bright,  
Which dwell in lakes, when the red moon on high  
Pause ere it wakens tempest ;—and her flight,  
Though 'twas the death of brainless phantasy,  
Yet smote my lonesome heart more than all misery.

## XXIII

" It seemed that in the dreary night, the diver  
Who brought me thither, came again, and bore  
My child away. I saw the waters quiver,  
When he so swiftly sunk, as once before :  
Then morning came—it shone even as of yore,  
But I was changed—the very life was gone  
Out of my heart—I wasted more and more,  
Day after day, and sitting there alone,  
Vexed the inconstant waves with my perpetual moan.

## XXIV

" I was no longer mad, and yet methought  
My breasts were swoln and changed :—in every vein  
The blood stood still one moment, while that thought  
Was passing—with a gush of sickening pain  
It ebb'd even to its withered springs again :  
When my wan eyes in stern resolve I turned  
From that most strange delusion, which would fain  
Have waked the dream for which my spirit yearned  
With more than human love,—then left it unreturned.

## XXV

" So now my reason was restored to me,  
I struggled with that dream, which, like a beast  
Most fierce and beauteous, in my memory  
Had made its lair, and on my heart did feast ;  
But all that cave and all its shapes possess  
By thoughts which could not fade, renewed each one  
Some smile, some look, some gesture which had blest  
Me heretofore : I, sitting there alone,  
Vexed the inconstant waves with my perpetual moan.

## XXVI

" Time past, I know not whether months or years ;  
For day, nor night, nor change of seasons made  
Its note, but thoughts and unavailing tears :  
And I became at last even as a shade,  
A smoke, a cloud on which the winds have preyed,  
Till it be thin as air ; until, one even,  
A Nautilus upon the fountain played,  
Spreading 'his azure sail where breath of Heaven  
Descended not, among the waves and whirlpools driven.

## XXVII

" And when the Eagle came, that lovely thing,  
 Oaring with rosy feet its silver boat,  
 Fled near me as for shelter ; on slow wing,  
 The Eagle, hovering o'er his prey, did float ;  
 But when he saw that I with fear did note  
 His purpose, proffering my own food to him,  
 The eager plumes subsided on his throat—  
 He came where that bright child of sea did swim,  
 And o'er it cast in peace his shadow broad and dim.

## XXVIII

" This wakened me, it gave me human strength :  
 And hope, I know not whence or wherefore, rose,  
 But I resumed my ancient powers at length ;  
 My spirit felt again like one of those,  
 Like thine, whose fate it is to make the woes  
 Of humankind their prey—what was this cave ?  
 Its deep foundation no firm purpose knows  
 Immutable, resistless, strong to save,  
 Like mind while yet it mocks the all-devouring grave.

## XXIX

" And where was Laon ? might my heart be dead,  
 While that far dearer heart could move and be ?  
 Or whilst over the earth the pall was spread,  
 Which I had sworn to rend ? I might be free,  
 Could I but win that friendly bird to me,  
 To bring me ropes ; and long in vain I sought  
 By intercourse of mutual imagery  
 Of objects, if such aid he could be taught ;  
 But fruit, and flowers, and boughs, yet never ropes he brought.

## XXX

" We live in our own world, and mine was made  
 From glorious phantasies of hope departed :  
 Aye, we are darkened with their floating shade,  
 Or cast a lustre on them—time imparted  
 Such power to me, I became fearless-hearted ;  
 My eye and voice grew firm, calm was my mind,  
 And piercing, like the morn, now it has darted  
 Its lustre on all hidden things, behind  
 Yon dim and fading clouds which load the weary wind.

## XXXI

" My mind became the book through which I grew  
 Wise in all human wisdom, and its cave,  
 Which like a mine I rifled through and through,  
 To me the keeping of its secrets gave—  
 One mind, the type of all, the moveless wave  
 Whose calm reflects all moving things that are,  
 Necessity, and love, and life, the grave,  
 And sympathy, fountains of hope and fear ;  
 Justice, and truth, and time, and the world's natural sphere.

## XXXII

" And on the sand would I make signs to range  
 These woofs, as they were woven, of my thought ;

Clear elemental shapes, whose smallest change  
 A subtler language within language wrought :  
 The key of truths which once were dimly taught  
 In old Crotona ;—and sweet melodies  
 Of love, in that lone solitude I caught  
 • From thine own voice in dream, when thy dear eyes  
 Shone through my sleep, and did that utterance harmonise.

## XXXIII

“ Thy songs were winds whereon I fled at will,  
 As in a winged chariot, o’er the plain  
 Of crystal youth ; and thou wert there to fill  
 My heart with joy, and there we sate again  
 On the grey margin of the glimmering main.  
 Happy as then but wiser far, for we  
 Smiled on the flowery grave in which were lain  
 Fear, Faith, and Slavery ; and mankind was free,  
 Equal, and pure, and wise, in wisdom’s prophecy.

## XXXIV

“ For to my will my fancies were as slaves  
 To do their sweet and subtle ministries ;  
 And oft from that bright fountain’s shadowy waves  
 They would make human throngs gather and rise  
 To combat with my overflowing eyes,  
 And voice made deep with passion—thus I grew  
 Familiar with the shock and the surprise  
 And war of earthly minds, from which I drew  
 The power which has been mine to frame their thoughts anew.

## XXXV

• “ And thus my prison was the populous earth—  
 Where I saw—even as misery dreams of morn  
 Before the east has given its glory birth—  
 Religion’s pomp made desolate by the scorn  
 Of Wisdom’s faintest smile, and thrones upturn,  
 And dwellings of mild people interspersed  
 With undivided fields of ripening corn,  
 And love made free,—a hope which we have nurst  
 Even with our blood and tears,—until its glory burst.

## XXXVI

“ All is not lost ! There is some recompense  
 For hope whose fountain can be thus profound,  
 Even throned Evil’s splendid impotence,  
 Girt by its hell of power, the secret sound  
 Of hymns to truth and freedom,—the dread bound  
 Of life and death passed fearlessly and well,  
 Dungeons wherein the high resolve is found,  
 Racks which degraded woman’s greatness tell,  
 And what may else be good and irresistible.

## XXXVII

“ Such are the thoughts which, like the fires that flare  
 In storm-encompassed isles, we cherish yet  
 In this dark ruin—such were mine even there ;  
 As in its sleep some odorous violet,  
 While yet its leaves with nightly dews are wet,



Breathes in prophetic dreams of day's uprise,  
Or, as ere Scythian frost in fear has met  
Spring's messengers descending from the skies,  
The buds foreknow their life—this hope must ever rise.

## XXXVIII

"So years had past, when sudden earthquake rent  
The depth of ocean, and the cavern crackt  
With sound, as if the world's wide continent  
Had fallen in universal ruin wrackt;  
And through the cleft streamed in one cataract  
The stifling waters:—when I woke, the flood,  
Whose banded waves that crystal cave had sacked,  
Was ebbing round me, and my bright abode  
Before me yawned—a chasm desert, and bare, and broad.

## XXXIX

"Above me was the sky, beneath the sea:  
I stood upon a point of shattered stone,  
And heard loose rocks rushing tumultuously  
With splash and shock into the deep—anon  
All ceased, and there was silence wide and lone.  
I felt that I was free! The Ocean spray  
Quivered beneath my feet; the broad Heaven shone  
Around, and in my hair the winds did play,  
Lingering as they pursued their unimpeded way.

## XL

"My spirit moved upon the sea like wind  
Which round some thymy cape will lag and hover,  
Though it can wake the still cloud, and unbind  
The strength of tempest: day was almost over,  
When through the fading light I could discover  
A ship approaching—its white sails were fed  
With the north wind—its moving shade did cover  
The twilight deep;—the mariners in dread  
Cast anchor when they saw new rocks around them spread.

## XLI

"And when they saw one sitting on a crag,  
They sent a boat to me;—the sailors rowed  
In awe through many a new and fearful jag  
Of overhanging rock, through which there flowed  
The foam of streams that cannot make abode.  
They came and questioned me, but, when they heard  
My voice, they became silent, and they stood  
And moved as men in whom new love had stirred  
Deep thoughts: so to the ship we past without a word.

## CANTO VIII

## I

"I SAT beside the steersman then, and, gazing  
Upon the west, cried, 'Spread the sails! behold!  
The sinking moon is like a watch-tower blazing

Over the mountains yet ;—the City of Gold  
 Yon Cape alone does from the sight withhold ;  
 The stream is fleet—the north breathes steadily  
 Beneath the stars ; they tremble with the cold !  
 Ye cannot rest upon the dreary sea ;—  
 Haste, haste to the warm home of happier destiny !

## II

" The Mariners obeyed—the Captain stood  
 Aloof, and, whispering to the Pilot, said,  
 ' Alas, alas ! I fear we are pursued  
 By wicked ghosts : a Phantom of the Dead,  
 The night before we sailed, came to my bed  
 In dream, like that ! ' The Pilot then replied,  
 ' It cannot be—she is a human Maid—  
 Her low voice makes you weep—she is some bride,  
 Or daughter of high birth—she can be nought beside.'

## III

" We past the islets, borne by wind and stream,  
 And as we sailed, the Mariners came near  
 And thronged around to listen ;—in the gleam  
 Of the pale moon I stood, as one whom fear  
 May not attain, and my calm voice did rear :  
 ' Ye are all human—yon broad moon gives light  
 To millions who the self-same likeness wear.  
 Even while I speak—beneath this very night,  
 Their thoughts flow on like ours, in sadness or delight.

## IV

" ' What dream ye ? Your own hands have built a home,  
 Even for yourselves on a beloved shore :  
 For some, fond eyes are pining till they come,  
 How they will greet him when his toils are o'er,  
 And laughing babes rush from the well-known door !  
 Is this your care ? ye toil for your own good—  
 Ye feel and think—has some immortal power  
 Such purposes ? or in a human mood,  
 Dream ye some Power thus builds for man in solitude ?

## V

" ' What is that Power ? Ye mock yourselves, and give  
 A human heart to what ye cannot know :  
 As if the cause of life could think and live !  
 'Twere as if man's own works should feel, and show  
 The hopes, and fears, and thoughts, from which they flow,  
 And he be like to them. Lo ! Plague is free  
 To waste, Blight, Poison, Earthquake, Hail, and Snow,  
 Disease, and Want, and worse necessity  
 Of hate and ill, and Pride, and Fear, and Tyranny.

## VI

" ' What is that Power ? Some moonstruck sophist stood,  
 Watching the shade from his own soul upthrown  
 Fill Heaven and darken Earth, and in such mood  
 The Form he saw and worshipped was his own,  
 His likeness in the world's vast mirror shown ;

And 'twere an innocent dream, but that a faith  
Nursed by fear's dew of poison, grows thereon,  
And that men say, that Power has chosen Death  
On all who scorn its laws, to wreak immortal wrath.

## VII

" ' Men say that they themselves have heard and seen,  
Or known from others who have known such things,  
A Shade, a Form, which Earth and Heaven between  
Wields an invisible rod—that Priests and Kings,  
Custom, domestic sway, ay, all that brings  
Man's free-born soul beneath the oppressor's heel,  
Are his strong ministers, and that the stings  
Of death will make the wise his vengeance feel,  
Though truth and virtue arm their hearts with tenfold steel.

## VIII

" ' And it is said, this Power will punish wrong ;  
Yes, add despair to crime, and pain to pain !  
And deepest hell, and deathless snakes among,  
Will bind the wretch on whom is fixed a stain,  
Which, like a plague, a burthen, and a bane,  
Clung to him while he lived ;—for love and hate,  
Virtue and vice, they say, are difference vain—  
The will of strength is right—this human state  
Tyrants, that they may rule, with lies thus desolate.

## IX

" ' Alas, what strength ? Opinion is more frail  
Than yon dim cloud now fading on the moon  
Even while we gaze, though it awhile avail  
To hide the orb of truth—and every throne  
Of Earth or Heaven, though shadow rests thereon,  
One shape of many names :—for this ye plough  
The barren waves of ocean ; hence each one  
Is slave or tyrant ; all betray and bow,  
Command, or kill, or fear, or wreak, or suffer woe.

## X

" ' Its names are each a sign which maketh holy  
All power—ay, the ghost, the dream, the shade,  
Of power—lust, falsehood, hate, and pride, and folly ;  
The pattern whence all fraud and wrong is made,  
A law to which mankind has been betrayed ;  
And human love, is as the name well known  
Of a dear mother, whom the murderer laid  
In bloody grave, and, into darkness thrown,  
Gathered her wildered babes around him as his own.

## XI

" ' O love ! who to the hearts of wandering men  
Art as the calm to Ocean's weary waves !  
Justice, or truth, or joy ! thou only can  
From slavery and religion's labyrinth caves  
Guide us, as one clear star the seamen saves.  
To give to all an equal share of good,  
To track the steps of freedom, though through graves

She pass ; to suffer all in patient mood ;  
To weep for crime, though stained with thy friend's dearest blood ;

## XII

" ' To feel the peace of self-contentment's lot,  
To own all sympathies, and outrage none ;  
And, in the inmost bowers of sense and thought,  
Until life's sunny day is quite gone down,  
To sit and smile with Joy, or, not alone,  
To kiss salt tears from the worn cheek of Woe ;  
To live, as if to love and live were one ;—  
This is not faith or law, nor those who bow  
To thrones on Heaven or Earth such destiny may know.

## XIII

" ' But children near their parents tremble now,  
Because they must obey—one rules another,  
And as one Power rules both high and low,  
So man is made the captive of his brother,  
And Hate is throned on high with Fear her mother,  
Above the Highest—and those fountain-cells,  
Whence love yet flowed when faith had choked all other,  
Are darkened—Woman, as the bond-slave, dwells  
Of man, a slave ; and life is poisoned in its wells.

## XIV

" ' Man seeks for gold in mines, that he may weave  
A lasting chain for his own slavery ;—  
In fear and restless care that he may live  
He toils for others, who must ever be  
The joyless thralls of like captivity ;  
He murders, for his chiefs delight in ruin ;  
He builds the altar, that its idol's fee  
May be his very blood ; he is pursuing,  
O, blind and willing wretch ! his own obscure undoing.

## XV

" ' Woman !—she is his slave, she has become  
A thing I weep to speak—the child of scorn,  
The outcast of a desolated home.  
Falsehood, and fear, and toil, like waves have worn  
Channels upon her cheek, which smiles adorn,  
As calm decks the false Ocean :—well ye know  
What Woman is, for none of Woman born  
Can choose but drain the bitter dregs of woe,  
Which ever from the oppressed to the oppressors flow.

## XVI

" ' This need not be ; ye might arise, and will  
That gold should lose its power, and thrones their glory ;  
That love, which none may bind, be free to fill  
The world, like light ; and evil faith, grown hoary  
With crime, be quenched and die.—Yon promontory  
Even now eclipses the descending moon !—  
Dungeons and palaces are transitory—  
High temples fade like vapour—Man alone  
Remains, whose will has power when all beside is gone."

## XVII

“ ‘ Let all be free and equal !—From your hearts  
 I feel an echo ; through my inmost frame  
 Like sweetest sound, seeking its mate, it darts—  
 Whence come ye, friends ? Alas, I cannot name  
 All that I read of sorrow, toil, and shame,  
 On your worn faces ; as in legends old  
 Which make immortal the disastrous fame  
 Of conquerors and impostors false and bold,  
 The discord of your hearts I in your looks behold.

## XVIII

“ ‘ Whence come ye, friends ? from pouring human blood  
 Forth on the earth ? or bring ye steel and gold,  
 That Kings may dupe and slay the multitude ?  
 Or from the famished poor, pale, weak, and cold,  
 Bear ye the earnings of their toil ? unfold !  
 Speak ! are your hands in slaughter's sanguine hue  
 Stain'd freshly ? have your hearts in guile grown old ?  
 Know yourselves thus ? ye shall be pure as dew,  
 And I will be a friend and sister unto you.

## XIX

“ ‘ Disguise it not—we have one human heart—  
 All mortal thoughts confess a common home :  
 Blush not for what may to thyself impart  
 Stains of inevitable crime : the doom  
 Is this, which has, or may, or must, become  
 Thine, and all humankind's. Ye are the spoil\*  
 Which Time thus marks for the devouring tomb,  
 Thou and thy thoughts and they, and all the toil  
 Wherewith ye twine the rings of life's perpetual coil.

## XX

“ ‘ Disguise it not—ye blush for what ye hate,  
 And Enmity is sister unto Shame ;  
 Look on your mind—it is the book of fate—  
 Ah ! it is dark with many a blazoned name  
 Of misery—all are mirrors of the same ;  
 But the dark fiend who with his iron pen,  
 Dipped in scorn's fiery poison, makes his fame  
 Enduring there, would o'er the heads of men  
 Pass harmless, if they scorned to make their hearts his den.

## XXI

“ ‘ Yes, it is Hate, that shapeless fiendly thing  
 Of many names, all evil, some divine,  
 Whom self-contempt arms with a mortal sting ;  
 Which, when the heart its snaky folds entwine,  
 Is wasted quite, and when it doth repine  
 To gorge such bitter prey, on all beside  
 It turns with ninefold rage, as with its twine  
 When Amphisbæna some fair bird has tied,  
 Soon o'er the putrid mass he threats on every side.

## XXII

“ ‘ Reproach not thine own soul, but know thyself,  
 Nor hate another's crime, nor loathe thine own.  
 It is the dark idolatry of self,

Which, when our thoughts and actions once are gone,  
 Demands that man should weep, and bleed, and groan ;  
 O vacant expiation ! be at rest.—  
 The past is Death's, the future is thine own ;  
 And love and joy can make the foulest breast  
 A paradise of flowers, where peace might build her nest.'

## XXIII

' " Speak thou ! whence come ye ? '—A Youth made reply,  
 ' Wearily, wearily o'er the boundless deep  
 We sail ;—thou readest well the misery  
 Told in these faded eyes, but much doth sleep  
 Within, which there the poor heart loves to keep,  
 Or dare not write on the dishonoured brow ;  
 Even from our childhood have we learned to steep  
 The bread of slavery in the tears of woe,  
 And never dreamed of hope or refuge until now.

## XXIV

' " Yes—I must speak—my secret would have perished  
 Even with the heart it wasted, as a brand  
 Fades in the dying flame whose life it cherished,  
 But that no human bosom can withstand  
 Thee, wondrous Lady, and the mild command  
 Of thy keen eyes :—yes, we are wretched slaves,  
 Who from their wonted loves and native land  
 Are reft, and bear o'er the dividing waves  
 The unregarded prey of calm and happy graves.

## XXV

' " We drag afar from pastoral vales the fairest  
 Among the daughters of those mountains lone,  
 We drag them there, where all things best and rarest  
 Are stained and trampled :—years have come and gone  
 Since, like the ship which bears me, I have known  
 No thought ;—but now the eyes of one dear Maid  
 On mine with light of mutual love have shone—  
 She is my life,—I am but as the shade  
 Of her,—a smoke sent up from ashes, soon to fade.

## XXVI

' " For she must perish in the tyrant's hall—  
 Alas, alas ! '—He ceased, and by the sail  
 Sate cowering—but his sobs were heard by all,  
 And still before the ocean and the gale  
 The ship fled fast till the stars 'gan to fail.  
 All round me gathered with mute countenance,  
 The Seamen gazed, the Pilot, worn and pale  
 With toil, the Captain with grey locks, whose glance  
 Met mine in restless awe—they stood as in a trance.

## XXVII

' " Recede not ! pause not now ! thou art grown old,  
 But Hope will make thee young, for Hope and Youth  
 Are children of one mother, even Love—behold !  
 The eternal stars gaze on us !—is the truth

Within your soul ? care for your own, or ruth  
 For other's sufferings ? do ye thirst to bear  
 A heart which not the serpent custom's tooth  
 May violate ?—Be free ! and even here,  
 Swear to be firm till death !' They cried, ' We swear ! we swear !'

## XXVIII

" The very darkness shook, as with a blast  
 Of subterranean thunder at the cry ;  
 The hollow shore its thousand echoes cast  
 Into the night, as if the sea, and sky,  
 And earth, rejoiced with new born liberty,  
 For in that name they swore ! Bolts were undrawn,  
 And on the deck, with unaccustomed eye  
 The captives gazing stood, and every one  
 Shrank as the inconstant torch upon her countenance shone.

## XXIX

" They were earth's purest children, young and fair,  
 With eyes the shrines of unawakened thought,  
 And brows as bright as spring or morning, ere  
 Dark time had there its evil legend wrought  
 In characters of cloud which wither not.—  
 The change was like a dream to them ; but soon  
 They knew the glory of their altered lot,  
 In the bright wisdom of youth's breathless noon,  
 Sweet talk, and smiles, and sighs, all bosoms did attune.

## XXX

" But one was mute, her cheeks and lips most fair,  
 Changing their hue like lilies newly blown,  
 Beneath a bright acacia's shadowy hair,  
 Waved by the wind amid the sunny noon,  
 Showed that her soul was quivering ; and full soon  
 That Youth arose, and breathlessly did look  
 On her and me, as for some speechless boon :  
 I smiled, and both their hands in mine I took,  
 And felt a soft delight from what their spirits shook.

## CANTO IX

## I

" THAT night we anchored in a woody bay,  
 And sleep no more around us dared to hover.  
 Than, when all doubt and fear has passed away,  
 It shades the couch of some unresting lover,  
 Whose heart is now at rest : thus night passed over  
 In mutual joy :—around, a forest grew  
 Of poplars and dark oaks, whose shade did cover  
 The waning stars, pranked in the waters blue,  
 And trembled in the wind which from the morning flew.

## II

" The joyous mariners, and each free maiden,  
 Now brought from the deep forest many a bough,  
 With woodland spoil most innocently laden ;

Soon wreaths of budding foliage seemed to flow  
 Over the mast and sails, the stern and prow  
 Were canopied with blooming boughs,—the while  
 On the slant sun's path o'er the waves we go  
 Rejoicing, like the dwellers of an isle  
 Doomed to pursue those waves that cannot cease to smile.

## III

" The many ships spotting the dark blue deep  
 With snowy sails, fled fast as ours came nigh,  
 In fear and wonder ; and on every steep  
 Thousands did gaze, they heard the startling cry,  
 Like earth's own voice lifted unconquerably  
 To all her children, the unbounded mirth,  
 The glorious joy of thy name—Liberty !  
 They heard !—As o'er the mountains of the earth  
 From peak to peak leap on the beams of morning's birth :

## IV

" So from that cry over the boundless hills,  
 Sudden was caught one universal sound,  
 Like a volcano's voice, whose thunder fills  
 Remotest skies,—such glorious madness found  
 A path through human hearts with stream which drowned  
 Its struggling fears and cares, dark custom's brood ;  
 They knew not whence it came, but felt around  
 A wide contagion poured—they called aloud  
 On Liberty—that name lived on the sunny flood.

" We reached the port—alas ! from many spirits  
 The wisdom which had waked that cry, was fled,  
 Like the brief glory which dark Heaven inherits,  
 From the false dawn, which fades ere it is spread,  
 Upon the night's devouring darkness shed :  
 Yet soon bright day will burst—even like a chams  
 Of fire, to burn the shrouds outworn and dead  
 Which wrap the world ; a wide enthusiasm,  
 To cleanse the fevered world as with an earthquake's spasm.

## VI

" I walked through the great City then, but free  
 From shame or fear ; those toil-worn Mariners  
 And happy Maidens did encompass me ;  
 And like a subterranean wind that stirs  
 Some forest among caves, the hopes and fears  
 From every human soul, a murmur strange  
 Made as I past ; and many wept, with tears  
 Of joy and awe, and winged thoughts did range,  
 And half-extinguished words, which prophesied of change.

## VII

" For, with strong speech I tore the veil that hid  
 Nature, and Truth, and Liberty, and Love,—  
 As one who from some mountain's pyramid,  
 Points to the unrisen sun !—the shades approve



His truth, and flee from every stream and grove,  
 Thus, gentle thoughts did many a bosom fill,—  
 Wisdom the mail of tried affections wove  
 For many a heart, and tameless scorn of ill  
 Thrice steeped in molten steel the unconquerable will.

## VIII

"Some said I was a maniac wild and lost ;  
 Some, that I scarce had risen from the grave  
 The Prophet's virgin bride, a heavenly ghost :—  
 Some said I was a fiend from my weird cave,  
 Who had stolen human shape, and o'er the wave,  
 The forest, and the mountain, came ;—some said  
 I was the child of God, sent down to save  
 Women from bonds and death, and on my head  
 The burthen of their sins would frightfully be laid.

## IX

"But soon my human words found sympathy  
 In human hearts : the purest and the best,  
 As friend with friend made common cause with me,  
 And they were few, but resolute ;—the rest,  
 Ere yet success the enterprise had blest,  
 Leagued with me in their hearts ;—their meals, their slumber,  
 Their hourly occupations, were possest  
 By hopes which I had armed to overnumber  
 Those hosts of meaner cares, which life's strong wings encumber.

## X

"But chiefly women, whom my voice did waken  
 From their cold, careless, willing slavery,  
 Sought me . one truth their dreary prison has shaken,  
 They looked around, and lo ! they became free !  
 Their many tyrants sitting desolately  
 In slave-deserted halls, could none restrain ;  
 For wrath's red fire had withered in the eye,  
 Whose lightning once was death,—nor fear, nor gain  
 Could tempt one captive now to lock another's chain.

## XI

"Those who were sent to bind me, wept, and felt  
 Their minds outsoar the bonds which clasped them round,  
 Even as a waxen shape may waste and melt  
 In the white furnace ; and a visioned swound,  
 A pause of hope and awe, the City bound,  
 Which, like the silence of a tempest's birth,  
 When in its awful shadow it has wound  
 The sun, the wind, the ocean, and the earth,  
 Hung terrible, ere yet the lightnings have leapt forth.

## XII

"Like clouds inwoven in the silent sky,  
 By winds from distant regions meeting there,  
 In the high name of truth and liberty,  
 Around the City millions gathered were,  
 By hopes which sprang from many a hidden lair ;

Words, which the lore of truth in hues of grace  
 Arrayed, thine own wild songs which in the air  
 Like homeless odours floated, and the name  
 Of thee, and many a tongue which thou hadst dipped in flame.

## XIII

"The Tyrant knew his power was gone, but Fear,  
 The nurse of Vengeance, bade him wait the event—  
 That perfidy and custom, gold and prayer,  
 And whatsoe'er, when force is impotent,  
 To fraud the sceptre of the world has lent,  
 Might as he judged, confirm his failing sway.  
 Therefore throughout the streets, the Priests he sent  
 To curse the rebels.—To their gods did they  
 For Earthquake, Plague, and Want, kneel in the public way.

## XIV

"And grave and hoary men were bribed to tell  
 From seats where law is made the slave of wrong,  
 How glorious Athens in her splendour fell,  
 Because her sons were free,—and that among  
 Mankind, the many to the few belong,  
 By Heaven, and Nature, and Necessity.  
 They said, that age was truth, and that the young  
 Marred with wild hopes the peace of slavery,  
 With which old times and men had quelled the vain and free.

## XV

"And with the falsehood of their poisonous lips  
 They breathed on the enduring memory  
 Of sages and of bards a brief eclipse;  
 There was one teacher, whom necessity  
 Had armed with strength and wrong against mankind,  
 His slave and his avenger aye to be;  
 That we were weak and sinful, frail and blind,  
 And that the will of one was peace, and we  
 Should seek for nought on earth but toil and misery.

## XVI

"For thus we might avoid the hell hereafter.'  
 So spake the hypocrites, who cursed and lied;  
 Alas, their sway was past and tears and laughter  
 Clung to their hoary hair, withering the pride  
 Which in their hollow hearts dared still abide;  
 And yet obscener slaves with smoother brow,  
 And sneers on their strait lips, thin, blue, and wide,  
 Said, that the rule of men was over now,  
 And hence, the subject world to woman's will must bow;

## XVII

"And gold was scattered through the streets, and wine  
 Flowed at a hundred feasts within the wall.  
 In vain! The steady towers in Heaven did shine  
 As they were wont, nor at the priestly call  
 Left Plague her banquet in the Æthiop's hall,

Nor Famine from the rich man's portal came,  
 Where at her ease she ever preys on all  
 Who throng to kneel for food : nor fear, nor shame,  
 Nor faith, nor discord, dimmed hope's newly kindled flame.

## XVIII

" For gold was as a god whose faith began  
 To fade, so that its worshippers were few,  
 And Faith itself, which in the heart of man  
 Gives shape, voice, name, to spectral Terror, knew  
 Its downfall, as the altars lonelier grew,  
 Till the Priests stood alone within the fane  
 The shafts of falsehood unpolluting flew,  
 And the cold sneers of calumny were vain  
 The union of the free with discord's brand to stain.

## XIX

" The rest thou knowest.—Lo ! —we two are here—  
 We have survived a ruin wide and deep—  
 Strange thoughts are mine.—I cannot grieve nor fear,  
 Sitting with thee upon this lonely steep  
 I smile, though human love should make me weep.  
 We have survived a joy that knows no sorrow,  
 And I do feel a mighty calmness creep  
 Over my heart, which can no longer borrow  
 Its hues from chance or change, dark children of to-morrow.

## XX

" We know not what will come—yet, Laon, dearest,  
 Cythna shall be the prophetess of love,  
 Her lips shall rob thee of the grace thou wearest,  
 To hide thy heart, and clothe the shapes which rove  
 Within the homeless future's wintry grove ;  
 For I now, sitting thus beside thee, seem  
 Even with thy breath and blood to live and move,  
 And violence and wrong are as a dream  
 Which rolls from steadfast truth, an unreturning stream.

## XXI

" The blasts of autumn drive the winged seeds  
 Over the earth,—next come the snows, and rain,  
 And frosts, and storms, which dreary winter leads  
 Out of his Scythian cave, a savage train ;  
 Behold ! Spring sweeps over the world again,  
 Shedding soft dews from her ethereal wings ;  
 Flowers on the mountains, fruits over the plain,  
 And music on the waves and woods she flings,  
 And love on all that lives ; and calm on lifeless things.

## XXII

" O Spring ! of hope, and love, and youth, and gladness,  
 Wind-winged emblem ! brightest, best, and fairest !  
 Whence comest thou, when, with dark winter's sadness  
 The tears that fade in sunny smiles thou sharest ?  
 Sister of joy ! thou art the child who wearest

Thy mother's dying smile, tender and sweet ;  
 Thy mother Autumn, for whose grave thou bearest  
 Fresh flowers, and beams like flowers, with gentle feet,  
 Disturbing not the leaves which are her winding-sheet.

## XXIII

" Virtue, and Hope, and Love, like light and Heaven,  
 Surround the world.—We are their chosen slaves.  
 Has not the whirlwind of our spirit driven  
 Truth's deathless germs to thought's remotest caves ?  
 Lo, Winter comes !—the grief of many graves,  
 The frost of death, the tempest of the sword,  
 The flood of tyranny, whose sanguine waves  
 Stagnate like ice at Faith, the enchanter's word,  
 And bind all human hearts in its repose abhorred.

## XXIV

" The seeds are sleeping in the soil : meanwhile  
 The tyrant peoples dungeons with his prey ;  
 Pale victims on the guarded scaffold smile  
 Because they cannot speak ; and, day by day,  
 The moon of wasting Science wanes away  
 Among her stars, and in that darkness vast  
 The sons of earth to their foul idols pray,  
 And grey Priests triumph, and like blight or blast  
 A shade of selfish care o'er human looks is cast.

## XXV

" This is the Winter of the world ;—and here  
 We die, even as the winds of Autumn fade,  
 Expiring in the frore and foggy air.—  
 Behold ! Spring comes, though we must pass, who made  
 The promise of its birth,—even as the shade  
 Which from our death, as from a mountain, flings  
 The future, a broad sunrise ; thus arrayed  
 As with the plumes of overshadowing wings,  
 From its dark gulf of chains, Earth like an eagle springs.

## XXVI

" O dearest love ! we shall be dead and cold  
 Before this morn may on the world arise :  
 Wouldst thou the glory of its dawn behold ?  
 Alas ! gaze not on me, but turn thine eyes  
 On thine own heart—it is a paradise  
 Which everlasting spring has made its own,  
 And while drear winter fills the naked skies,  
 Sweet streams of sunny thought, and flowers fresh blown  
 Are there, and weave their sounds and odours into one.

## XXVII

" In their own hearts the earnest of the hope  
 Which made them great, the good will ever find ;  
 And though some envious shade may interlope  
 Between the effect and it, one comes behind,  
 Who aye the future to the past will bind—

Necessity, whose sightless strength for ever  
 Evil with evil, good with good, must wind  
 In bands of union, which no power may sever :  
 They must bring forth their kind, and be divided never !

## XXVIII

" The good and mighty of departed ages  
 Are in their graves, the innocent and free,  
 Heroes, and Poets, and prevailing Sages,  
 Who leave the vesture of their majesty  
 To adorn and clothe this naked world ;—and we  
 Are like to them—such perish, but they leave  
 All hope, or love, or truth, or liberty,  
 Whose forms their mighty spirits could conceive  
 To be a rule and law to ages that survive.

## XXIX

" So be the turf heaped over our remains  
 Even in our happy youth, and that strange lot  
 Whate'er it be, when in these mingling veins  
 The blood is still, be ours ; let sense and thought  
 Pass from our being, or be numbered not  
 Among the things that are ; let those who come  
 Behind, for whom our steadfast will has bought  
 A calm inheritance, a glorious doom,  
 Insult with careless tread our undivided tomb.

## XXX

" Our many thoughts and deeds, our life and love,  
 Our happiness, and all that we have been,  
 Immortally must live, and burn, and move,  
 When we shall be no more ; the world has seen  
 A type of peace ; and as some most serene  
 And lovely spot to a poor maniac's eye,  
 After long years, some sweet and moving scene  
 Of youthful hope returning suddenly,  
 Quells his long madness—thus man shall remember thee.

## XXXI

" And calumny meanwhile shall feed on us,  
 As worms devour the dead, and near the throne  
 And at the altar, most accepted thus  
 Shall sneers and curses be ;—what we have done  
 None shall dare vouch, though it be truly known ;  
 That record shall remain, when they must pass  
 Who built their pride on its oblivion ;  
 And fame, in human hope which sculptured was,  
 Survive the perished scrolls of unenduring brass.

## XXXII

" The while we two, beloved, must depart,  
 And Sense and Reason, those enchanters fair,  
 Whose wand of power is hope, would bid the heart  
 That gazed beyond the wormy grave despair :  
 These eyes, these lips, this blood, seems darkly there

To fade in hideous ruin ; no calm sleep  
 Peopling with golden dreams the stagnant air,  
 Seems our obscure and rotting eyes to steep  
 In joy ;—but senseless death—a ruin dark and deep !

## XXXIII

“ These are blind fancies. Reason cannot know  
 What sense can neither feel, nor thought conceive ;  
 There is delusion in the world—and woe,  
 And fear, and pain—we know not whence we live,  
 Or why, or how, or what mute Power may give  
 Their being to each plant, and star, and beast,  
 Or even these thoughts.—Come near me ! I do weave  
 A chain I cannot break—I am possessèd  
 With thoughts too swift and strong for one lone human breast.

## XXXIV

“ Yes, yes—thy kiss is sweet, thy lips are warm—  
 O ! willingly, beloved, would these eyes,  
 Might they no more drink being from thy form,  
 Even as to sleep whence we again arise,  
 Close their faint orbs in death. I fear nor prize  
 Aught that can now betide, unshared by thee—  
 Yes, Love, when wisdom fails, makes Cythna wise ;  
 Darkness and death, if death be true, must be  
 Dearer than life and hope, if unenjoyed with thee.

## XXXV

“ Alas ! our thoughts flow on with stream, whose waters  
 Return not to their fountain—Earth and Heaven,  
 The Ocean and the Sun, the clouds their daughters,  
 Winter, and Spring, and Morn, and Noon, and Even,  
 All that we are or know, is darkly driven  
 Towards one gulf.—Lo ! what a change is come  
 Since I first spake—but time shall be forgiven,  
 Though it change all but thee ! ” She ceased—night's gloom  
 Meanwhile had fallen on earth from the sky's sunless dome.

## XXXVI

Though she had ceased, her countenance, uplifted  
 To heaven, still spake, with solemn glory bright ;  
 Her dark deep eyes, her lips, whose motions gifted  
 The air they breathed with love, her locks undight ;  
 “ Fair star of life and love,” I cried, “ my soul's delight,  
 Why lookest thou on the crystalline skies ?  
 O that my spirit were yon Heaven of night,  
 Which gazes on thee with its thousand eyes ! ”  
 She turned to me and smiled—that smile was Paradise !

## CANTO X

## I

Was there a human spirit in the steed,  
 That thus with his proud voice, ere night was gone,  
 He broke our linked rest ? or do indeed  
 All living things a common nature own,

And thought erect a universal throne,  
 Where many shapes one tribute ever bear ?  
 And Earth, their mutual mother, does she groan  
 To see her sons contend ? and makes she bare  
 Her breast, that all in peace its drainless stores may share ?

## II

I have heard friendly sounds from many a tongue  
 Which was not human—the lone Nightingale  
 Has answered me with her most soothing song,  
 Out of her ivy bower, when I sate pale  
 With grief, and sighed beneath ; from many a dale  
 The Antelopes who flocked for food have spoken  
 With happy sounds, and motions, that avail  
 Like man's own speech : and such was now the token  
 Of waning night, whose calm by that proud neigh was broken.

## III

Each night, that mighty steed bore me abroad,  
 And I returned with food to our retreat,  
 And dark intelligence ; the blood which flowed  
 Over the fields, had stained the courser's feet ;—  
 Soon the dust drinks that bitter dew,—then meet  
 The vulture, and the wild-dog, and the snake,  
 The wolf, and the hyæna grey, and eat  
 The dead in horrid truce : their throngs did make  
 Behind the steed, a chasm like waves in a ship's wake.

## IV

For, from the utmost realms of earth, came pouring  
 The banded slaves whom every despot sent  
 At that throned traitor's summons ; like the roaring  
 Of fire, whose floods the wild deer circumvent  
 In the scorched pastures of the South ; so bent  
 The armies of the leagued kings around  
 Their files of steel and flame ;—the continent  
 Trembled, as with a zone of ruin bound ;  
 Beneath their feet, the sea shook with their navies' sound.

## V

From every nation of the earth they came,  
 The multitude of moving heartless things,  
 Whom slaves call men : obediently they came,  
 Like sheep whom from the fold the shepherd brings  
 To the stall, red with blood ; their many kings  
 Led them, thus erring, from their native home ;  
 Tartar and Frank, and millions whom the wings  
 Of Indian breezes lull, and many a band  
 The Arctic Anarch sent, and Idumea's sand,

## VI

Fertile in prodigies and lies ;—so there  
 Strange natures made a brotherhood of ill.  
 The desert savage ceased to grasp in fear  
 His Asian shield and bow, when, at the will  
 Of Europe's subtler son, the bolt would kill

Some shepherd sitting on a rock secure ;  
But smiles of wondering joy his face would fill,  
And savage sympathy : those slaves impure,  
Each one the other thus from ill to ill did lure.

## VII

For traitorously did that foul Tyrant robe  
His countenance in lies ;—even at the hour  
When he was snatched from death, then o'er the globe,  
With secret signs from many a mountain tower,  
With smoke by day, and fire by night, the power  
Of king and priests, those dark conspirators  
He called :—they knew his cause their own, and swore  
Like wolves and serpents to their mutual wars  
Strange truce, with many a rite which Earth and Heaven abhors.

## VIII

Myriads had come—millions were on their way ;  
The Tyrant passed, surrounded by the steel  
Of hired assassins, through the public way,  
Choked with his country's dead ;—his footsteps reel  
On the fresh blood—he smiles. " Ay, now I feel  
I am a King in truth ! " he said, and took  
His royal seat, and bade the torturing wheel  
Be brought, and fire, and pincers, and the hook,  
And scorpions ! that his soul on its revenge might look.

## IX

" But first, go slay the rebels.—Why return  
The victor bands ? " he said : " millions yet live,  
Of whom the weakest with one word might turn  
The scales of victory yet ; let none survive  
But those within the walls—each fifth shall give  
The expiation for his brethren here.—  
Go forth, and waste and kill ; "—" O king, forgive  
My speech," a soldier answered ; " but we fear  
The spirits of the night, and morn is drawing near ;

## X.

" For we were slaying still without remorse,  
And now that dreadful chief beneath my hand  
Defenceless lay, when on a hell-black horse,  
An Angel bright as day, waving a brand  
Which flashed among the stars, passed."—" Dost thou stand  
Parleying with me, thou wretch ? " the king replied :  
" Slaves, bind him to the wheel ; and of this band,  
Whoso will drag that woman to his side  
That scared him thus, may burn his dearest foe beside ;

## XI

" And gold and glory shall be his.—Go forth ! "  
They rushed into the plain.—Loud was the roar  
Of their career : the horsemen shook the earth ;  
The wheeled artillery's speed the pavement tore ;  
The infantry, file after file, did pour



Their clouds on the utmost hills. Five days they slew  
 Among the wasted fields : the sixth saw gore  
 Stream through the city ; on the seventh, the dew  
 Of slaughter became stiff ; and there was peace anew :

## XII

Peace in 'the desert fields and villages,  
 Between the glutted beasts and mangled dead !  
 Peace in the silent streets ! save when the cries  
 Of victims, to their fiery judgment led,  
 Made pale their voiceless lips, who seemed to dread  
 Even in their dearest kindred, lest some tongue  
 Be faithless to the fear yet unbetrayed ;  
 Peace in the Tyrant's palace, where the throng  
 Vaste the triumphal hours in festival and song !

## XIII

Day after day the burning Sun rolled on  
 Over the death-polluted land ;—it came  
 Out of the east like fire, and fiercely shone  
 A lamp of Autumn, ripening with its flame  
 The few lone ears of corn ;—the sky became  
 Stagnate with heat, so that each cloud and blast  
 Languished and died ; the thirsting air did claim  
 All moisture, and a rotting vapour past  
 From the unburied dead, invisible and fast.

## XIV

First Want, then Plague, came on the beasts ; their food  
 Failed, and they drew the breath of its decay.  
 Millions on millions, whom the scent of blood  
 Had lured, or who, from regions far away,  
 Had tracked the hosts in festival array,  
 From their dark deserts ; gaunt and wasting now,  
 Stalked like fell shades among their perished prey ;  
 In their green eyes a strange disease did glow,  
 They sank in hideous spasm, or pains severe and slow.

## XV

The fish were poisoned in the streams ; the birds  
 In the green woods perished ; the insect race  
 Was withered up ; the scattered flocks and herds  
 Who had survived the wild beasts' hungry chase  
 Died moaning, each upon the other's face  
 In helpless agony gazing ; round the City  
 All night, the lean hyænas their sad case  
 Like starving infants wailed—a woeful ditty !  
 And many a mother wept, pierced with unnatural pity.

## XVI

Amid the ærial minarets on high,  
 The Æthiopian vultures fluttering fell  
 From their long line of brethren in the sky,  
 Startling the concourse of mankind.—Too well  
 These signs the coming mischief did foretell :—

Strange panic first, a deep and sickening dread  
Within each heart, like ice, did sink and dwell,  
A voiceless thought of evil, which did spread  
With the quick glance of eyes, like withering lightnings shed.

## XVII

Day after day, when the year wanes, the frosts  
Strip its green crown of leaves, till all is bare ;  
So on those strange and congregated hosts  
Came ~~Famine~~, a swift shadow, and the air  
Groaned with the burden of a new despair ;  
Famine, than whom Misrule no deadlier daughter  
Feeds from her thousand breasts, though sleeping there  
With lidless eyes, lie Faith, and Plague, and Slaughter,  
A ghastly brood ; conceived of Lethe's sullen water.

## XVIII

There was no food ; the corn was trampled down,  
The flocks and herds had perished ; on the shore  
The dead and putrid fish were ever thrown :  
The deeps were foodless, and the winds no more  
Creaked with the weight of birds, but, as before  
Those winged things sprang forth, were void of shade ;  
The vines and orchards, Autumn's golden store,  
Were burned ; so that the meanest food was weighed  
With gold, and Avarice died before the god it made.

## XIX

There was no corn—in the wide market-place  
All loathliest things, even human flesh, was sold ;  
They weighed it in small scales—and many a face  
Was fixed in eager horror then his gold  
The miser brought ; the tender maid, grown bold  
Through hunger, bared her scorned charms in vain ;  
The mother brought her eldest-born, controlled  
By instinct blind as love, but turned again  
And bade her infant suck, and died in silent pain.

## XX

Then fell blue Plague upon the race of man.  
"O, for the sheathed steel, so late which gave  
Oblivion to the dead, when the streets ran  
With brothers' blood ! O, that the earthquake's grave  
Would gape, or Ocean lift its stifling wave !"  
Vain cries—throughout the streets, thousands pursued  
Each by his fiery torture, howl and rave,  
Or sit, in frenzy's unimagined mood,  
Upon fresh heaps of dead—a ghastly multitude.

## XXI

It was not hunger now, but thirst. Each well  
Was choked with rotting corpses, and became  
A cauldron of green mist made visible  
At sunrise. Thither still the myriads came,  
Seeking to quench the agony of the flame

Which raged like poison through their bursting veins ;  
 Naked they were from torture, without shame,  
 Spotted with nameless scars and lurid blains,  
 Childhood, and youth, and age, writhing in savage pains.

## XXII

It was not thirst but madness ! Many saw  
 Their own lean image everywhere ; it went  
 A ghastlier self beside them, till the awe  
 Of that dread sight to self-destruction sent  
 Those shrieking victims ; some, ere life was spent,  
 Sought, with a horrid sympathy, to shed  
 Contagion on the sound ; and others rent  
 Their matted hair, and cried aloud, " We tread  
 On fire ! the avenging Power his hell on earth has spread."

## XXIII

Sometimes the living by the dead were hid.  
 Near the great fountain in the public square,  
 Where corpses made a crumbling pyramid  
 Under the sun, was heard one stifled prayer  
 For life, in the hot silence of the air ;  
 And strange 'twas, amid that hideous heap to see  
 Some shrouded in their long and golden hair,  
 As if not dead, but slumbering quietly,  
 Like forms which sculptors carve, then love to agony.

## XXIV

Famine had spared the palace of the king :—  
 He rioted in festival the while,  
 He and his guards and priests ; but Plague did fling  
 One shadow upon all. Famine can smile  
 On him who brings it food, and pass, with guile  
 Of thankful falsehood, like a courtier grey,  
 The house-dog of the throne ; but many a mile  
 Comes Plague, a winged wolf, who loathes alway  
 The garbage and the scum that strangers make her prey.

## XXV

So, near the throne, amid the gorgeous feast,  
 Sheathed in resplendent arms, or loosely dight  
 To luxury, ere the mockery yet had ceased  
 That lingered on his lips, the warriors might  
 Was loosened, and a new and ghastlier night  
 In dreams of frenzy lapped his eyes ; he fell  
 Headlong, or with stiff eyeballs sate upright  
 Among the guests, or raving mad, did tell  
 Strange truths ; a dying seer of dark oppression's hell.

## XXVI

The Princes and the Priests were pale with terror ;  
 That monstrous faith wherewith they ruled mankind  
 Fell, like a shaft loosed by the bowman's error,  
 On their own hearts : they sought and they could find  
 No refuge—'twas the blind who led the blind !

So, through the desolate streets to the high fane,  
 The many-tongued and endless armies wind  
 In sad procession : each among the train  
 To his own Idol lifts his supplications vain.

## XXVII

" O God ! " they cried, " we know our secret pride  
 Has scorned thee, and thy worship, and thy name ;  
 Secure in human power, we have defied  
 Thy fearful might ; we bend in fear and shame  
 Before thy presence ; with the dust we claim  
 Kindred. Be merciful, O King of Heaven !  
 Most justly have we suffered for thy fame  
 Made dim, but be at length our sins forgiven,  
 Ere to despair and death thy worshippers be driven.

## XXVIII

" O King of Glory ! Thou alone hast power !  
 Who can resist thy will ? who can restrain  
 Thy wrath, when on the guilty thou dost shower  
 The shafts of thy revenge,—a blistering rain ?  
 Greatest and best, be merciful again !  
 Have we not stabbed thine enemies, and made  
 The Earth an altar, and the Heavens a fane,  
 Where thou wert worshipped with their blood, and laid  
 Those hearts in dust which would thy searchless works have weighed ?

## XXIX

" Well didst thou loosen on this impious City  
 Thine angels of revenge : recall them now ;  
 Thy worshippers abased, here kneel for pity,  
 And bind their souls by an immortal vow :  
 We swear by thee ! And to our oath do thou  
 Give sanction, from thine hell of fiends and flame,  
 That we will kill with fire and torments slow,  
 The last of those who mocked thy holy name,  
 And scorned the sacred laws thy prophets did proclaim."

## XXX

Thus they with trembling limbs and pallid lips  
 Worshipped their own hearts' image, dim and vast,  
 Scared by the shade wherewith they would eclipse  
 The light of other minds ;—troubled they past  
 From the great Temple. Fiercely still and fast  
 The arrows of the plague among them fell,  
 And they on one another gazed aghast,  
 And through the hosts contention wild befell,  
 As each of his own god the wondrous works did tell.

## XXXI

And Oromaze, Joshua, and Mahomet,  
 Moses, and Buddh, Zerdusht, and Brahm, and Foh,  
 A tumult of strange names, which never met  
 Before, as watchwords of a single woe,  
 Arose, Each raging votary 'gan to throw

Aloft his armed hands, and each did howl  
 "Our God alone is God!" and slaughter now  
 Would have gone forth, when, from beneath a cowl,  
 A voice came forth, which pierced like ice through every soul.

## XXXII

'Twas an Iberian Priest from whom it came,  
 A zealous man, who led the legioned west  
 With words which faith and pride had steeped in flame,  
 To quell the unbelievers; a dire guest  
 Even to his friends was he, for in his breast  
 Did hate and guile lie watchful, intertwined,  
 Twin serpents in one deep and winding nest;  
 He loathed all faith beside his own, and pined  
 To wreak his fear of Heaven in vengeance on mankind.

## XXXIII

But more he loathed and hated the clear light  
 Of wisdom and free thought, and more did fear,  
 Lest, kindled once, its beams might pierce the night,  
 Even where his Idol stood; for, far and near  
 Did many a heart in Europe leap to hear  
 That faith and tyranny were trampled down;  
 Many a pale victim, doomed for truth to share  
 The murderer's cell, or see, with helpless groan,  
 The priests his children drag for slaves to serve their own.

## XXXIV

He dared not kill the infidels with fire  
 Or steel, in Europe; the slow agonies  
 Of legal torture mocked his keen desire:  
 So he made truce with those who did despise  
 The expiation, and the sacrifice,  
 That, though detested, Islam's kindred creed  
 Might crush for him those deadlier enemies;  
 For fear of God did in his bosom breed,  
 A jealous hate of man, an unreposing need.

## XXXV

"Peace! Peace!" he cried. "When we are dead, the Day  
 Of Judgment comes, and all shall surely know  
 Whose God is God, each fearfully shall pay  
 The errors of his faith in endless woe!  
 But there is sent a mortal vengeance now  
 On earth, because an impious race had spurned  
 Him whom we all adore,—a subtle foe,  
 By whom for ye this dread reward was earned,  
 And kingly thrones, which rest on faith, nigh overturned.

## XXXVI

"Think ye, because we weep, and kneel, and pray,  
 That God will lull the pestilence? It rose  
 Even from beneath his throne, where, many a day  
 His mercy soothed it to a dark repose:

And what art thou and I, that he should deign  
To curb his ghastly minister, or close  
The gates of death, ere they receive the twain  
Who shook with mortal spells his undefended reign ?

## XXXVII

" Ay, there is famine in the gulf of hell,  
Its giant worms of fire for ever yawn,—  
Their lurid eyes are on us ! Those who fell  
By the swift shafts of pestilence ere dawn,  
Are in their jaws ! They hunger for the spawn  
Of Satan, their own brethren, who were sent  
To make our souls their spoil. See ! see ! they fawn  
Like dogs, and they will sleep with luxury spent,  
When those detested hearts their iron fangs have rent !

## XXXVIII

" Our God may then lull Pestilence to sleep :—  
Pile high the pyre of expiation now !  
A forest's spoil of boughs, and on the heap  
Pour venomous gums, which sullenly and slow,  
When touched by flame, shall burn, and melt, and flow,  
A stream of clinging fire,—and fix on high  
A net of iron, and spread forth below  
A couch of snakes, and scorpions, and the fry  
Of centipedes and worms, earth's hellish progeny !

## XXXIX

" Let Laon and Laone on that pyre,  
Linked tight with burning brass, perish !—then pray  
That, with this sacrifice, the withering ire  
Of Heaven may be appeased." He ceased, and they  
A space stood silent, as far, far away  
The echoes of his voice among them died ;  
And he knelt down upon the dust, alway  
Muttering the curses of his speechless pride,  
Whilst shame, and fear, and awe, the armies did divide.

## XL

His voice was like a blast that burst the portal  
Of fabled hell ; and as he spake, each one  
Saw gape beneath the chasms of fire immortal,  
And Heaven above seemed cloven, where, on a throne  
Girt round with storms and shadows, sate alone  
Their King and Judge. Fear killed in every breast  
All natural pity then, a fear unknown  
Before, and with an inward fire possessèd,  
They raged like homeless beasts whom burning woods invest.

## XLI

'Twas morn.—At noon the public crier went forth,  
Proclaiming through the living and the dead,  
" The Monarch saith, that his great Empire's worth  
Is set on Laon and Laone's head :  
He who but one yet living here can lead,

Or who the life from both their hearts can wring,  
 Shall be the kingdom's heir,—a glorious meed !  
 But he who both alive can hither bring,  
 "The Princess shall espouse, and reign an equal King."

## XLII

Ere night the pyre was piled, the net of iron  
 Was spread above, the fearful couch below ;  
 It overtopped the towers that did environ  
 That spacious square ; for Fear is never slow,  
 To build the thrones of Hate, her mate and foe,  
 So, she scourged forth the maniac multitude  
 To rear this pyramid—tottering and slow.  
 Plague-stricken, foodless, like lean herds pursued  
 By gad-flies, they have piled the heath, and gums, and wood.

## XLIII

Night came, a starless and a moonless gloom.  
 Until the dawn, those hosts of many a nation  
 Stood round that pile, as near one lover's tomb  
 Two gentle sisters mourn their desolation  
 And in the silence of that expectation,  
 Was heard on high the reptiles' hiss and crawl—  
 It was so deep, save when the devastation  
 Of the swift pest with fearful interval,  
 Marking its path with shrieks, among the crowd would fall.

## XLIV

Morn came.—Among those sleepless multitudes,  
 Madness, and Fear, and Plague, and Famine, still  
 Heaped corpse on corpse, as in autumnal woods  
 The frosts of many a wind with dead leaves fill  
 Earth's cold and sullen brooks. In silence still  
 The pale survivors stood ; ere noon, the fear  
 Of hell became a panic, which did kill  
 Like hunger or disease, with whispers drear,  
 As "Hush ! hark ! Come they yet ? Just Heaven ! thine hour is  
 near !"

## XLV

And Priests rushed through their ranks, some counterfeiting  
 The rage they did inspire, some mad indeed  
 With their own lies. They said their god was waiting  
 To see his enemies writhe, and burn, and bleed,—  
 And that, till then, the snakes of Hell had need  
 Of human souls.—Three hundred furnaces  
 Soon blazed through the wide City, where, with speed,  
 Men brought their infidel kindred to appease  
 God's wrath, and while they burned, knelt round on quivering knees.

## XLVI

The noontide sun was darkened with that smoke,  
 The winds of eve dispersed those ashes grey.  
 The madness which these rites had lulled, awoke  
 Again at sunset.—Who shall dare to say

The deeds which night and fear brought forth, or weigh  
 In balance just the good and evil there ?  
 He might man's deep and searchless heart display,  
 And cast a light on those dim labyrinths, where  
 Hope, near imagined chasms, is struggling with despair.

## XLVII

'Tis said, a mother dragged three children then,  
 To those fierce flames which roast the eyes in the head,  
 And laughed and died ; and that unholy men,  
 Feasting like fiends upon the infidel dead,  
 Looked from their meal, and saw an Angel tread  
 The visible floor of Heaven, and it was she !  
 And, on that night, one without doubt or dread  
 Came to the fire and said, " Stop, I am he !  
 Kill me ! "—They burned them both with hellish mockery.

## XLVIII

And, one by one, that night, young maidens came,  
 Beauteous and calm, like shapes of living stone  
 Clothed in the light of dreams, and by the flame  
 Which shrank as overgorged, they laid them down,  
 And sung a low sweet song, of which alone  
 One word was heard, and that was Liberty ;  
 And that some kissed their marble feet, with moan  
 Like love, and died, and then that they did die  
 With happy smiles, which sunk in white tranquillity.

## CANTO XI

## I

SHE saw me not—she heard me not—alone  
 Upon the mountain's dizzy brink she stood ;  
 She spake not, breathed not, moved not—there was thrown  
 Over her look, the shadow of a mood  
 Which only clothes the heart in solitude,  
 A thought of voiceless death.—She stood alone,  
 Above, the Heavens were spread ;—below, the flood  
 Was murmuring in its caves ;—the wind had blown  
 Her hair apart, thro' which her eyes and forehead shone.

## II

A cloud was hanging o'er the western mountains ;  
 Before its blue and moveless depth were flying  
 Grey mists poured forth from the unresting fountains  
 Of darkness in the North :—the day was dying :—  
 Sudden, the sun shone forth ; its beams were lying  
 Like boiling gold on Ocean, strange to see,  
 And on the shattered vapours, which, defying  
 The power of light in vain, tossed restlessly  
 In the red Heaven, like wrecks in a tempestuous sea.



## III

It was a stream of living beams, whose bank  
 On either side by the cloud's cleft was made ;  
 And where its chasms that flood of glory drank,  
 Its waves gushed forth like fire, and, as if swayed  
 By some mute tempest, rolled on *her*. The shade  
 Of her bright image floated on the river  
 Of liquid light, which then did end and fade—  
 Her radiant shape upon its verge did shiver ;  
 Aloft her flowing hair like strings of flame did quiver.

## IV

I stood beside her, but she saw me not—  
 She looked upon the sea, and skies, and earth.  
 Rapture, and love, and admiration, wrought  
 A passion deeper far than tears, or mirth,  
 Or speech, or gesture, or whate'er has birth  
 From common joy ; which, with the speechless feeling  
 That led her there, united, and shot forth  
 From her far eyes, a light of deep revealing,  
 All but her dearest self from my regard concealing.

## V

Her lips were parted, and the measured breath  
 Was now heard there ;—her dark and intricate eyes  
 Orb within orb, deeper than sleep or death,  
 Absorbed the glories of the burning skies,  
 Which, mingling with her heart's deep ecstasies,  
 Burst from her looks and gestures ;—and a light  
 Of liquid tenderness, like love, did rise  
 From her whole frame,—an atmosphere which quite  
 Arrayed her in its beams, tremulous and soft and bright.

## VI

She would have clasped me to her glowing frame ;  
 Those warm and odorous lips might soon have shed  
 On mine the fragrance and the invisible flame  
 Which now the cold winds stole ;—she would have laid  
 Upon my languid heart her dearest head ;  
 I might have heard her voice, tender and sweet ;  
 Her eyes mingling with mine, might soon have fed  
 My soul with their own joy.—One moment yet  
 I gazed—we parted then, never again to meet !

## VII

Never but once to meet on earth again !  
 She heard me as I fled—her eager tone  
 Sank on my heart, and almost wove a chain  
 Around my will to link it with her own,  
 So that my stern resolve was almost gone.  
 " I cannot reach thee ! whither dost thou fly ?  
 My steps are faint.—Come back, thou dearest one—  
 Return, ah me ! return ! " The wind passed by  
 On which those accents died, faint, far, and lingeringly.

## VIII

Woe ! woe ! that moonless midnight.—Want and Pest  
 Were horrible, but one more fell doth rear,  
 As in a hydra's swarming lair, its crest  
 Eminent among those victims—even the Fear  
 Of Hell : each girt by the hot atmosphere  
 Of his blind agony, like a scorpion stung  
 By his own rage upon his burning bier  
 Of circling coals of fire ; but still there clung  
 One hope, like a keen sword on starting threads uphung :

## IX

Not death—death was no more refuge or rest ;  
 Not life—it was despair to be !—not sleep,  
 For fiends and chasms of fire had dispossessed  
 All natural dreams ; to wake was not to weep,  
 But to gaze mad and pallid, at the leap  
 To which the Future, like a snaky scourge,  
 Or like some tyrant's eye, which aye doth keep  
 Its withering beam upon its slaves, did urge  
 Their steps :—they heard the roar of Hell's sulphureous surge.

## X

Each of that multitude alone, and lost  
 To sense of outward things, one hope yet knew ;  
 As on a foam-girt crag some seaman tost,  
 Stares at the rising tide, or like the crew  
 Whilst now the ship is splitting through and through ;  
 Each, if the tramp of a far steed was heard,  
 Started from sick despair, or if there flew  
 One murmur on the wind, or if some word  
 Which none can gather yet, the distant crowd has stirred,

## XI

Why became cheeks, wan with the kiss of death,  
 Paler from hope ? they had sustained despair.  
 Why watched those myriads with suspended breath  
 Sleepless a second night ? they are not here  
 The victims, and hour by hour, a vision drear,  
 Warm corpses fall upon the clay-cold dead ;  
 And even in death their lips are writhed with fear.—  
 The crowd is mute and moveless—overhead  
 Silent Arcturus shines—Ha ! hears't thou not the tread

## XII

Of rushing feet ? laughter ? the shout, the scream,  
 Of triumph not to be contained ? See ! hark !  
 They come, they come ! give way ! Alas, ye deem  
 Falsely—'tis but a crowd of maniacs stark  
 Driven, like a troop of spectres, through the dark  
 From the choked well, whence a bright death-fire sprung,  
 A lurid earth-star, which dropped many a spark  
 From its blue train, and spreading widely, clung  
 To their wild hair, like mist the topmost pines among.

## XIII

And many, from the crowd collected there,  
 Joined that strange dance in fearful sympathies;  
 There was the silence of a long despair,  
 When the last echo of those terrible cries<sup>s</sup>  
 Came from a distant street, like agonies  
 Stifled afar.—Before the Tyrant's throne  
 All night his aged Senate sate, their eyes  
 In stony expectation fixed; when one  
 Sudden before them stood, a Stranger and alone.

## XIV

Dark Priests and haughty Warriors gazed on him  
 With baffled wonder, for a hermit's vest  
 Concealed his face; but when he spake, his tone,  
 Ere yet the matter did their thoughts arrest,  
 Earnest, benignant, calm, as from a breast  
 Void of all hate or terror, made them start;  
 For as with gentle accents he addressed  
 His speech to them, on each unwilling heart  
 Unusual awe did fall—a spirit-quelling dart.

## XV

“Ye Princes of the Earth, ye sit aghast  
 Amid the ruin which yourselves have made;  
 Yes, Desolation heard your trumpet's blast,  
 And sprang from sleep!—dark Terror has obeyed  
 Your bidding—Oh that I, whom ye have made  
 Your foe, could set my dearest enemy free  
 From pain and fear! but evil casts a shade  
 Which cannot pass so soon, and Hate must be  
 The nurse and parent still of an ill progeny.

## XVI

“Ye turn to Heaven for aid in your distress;  
 Alas, that ye, the mighty and the wise,  
 Who, if ye dared, might not aspire to less  
 Than ye conceive of power, should fear the lies  
 Which thou, and thou, didst frame for mysteries  
 To blind your slaves:—consider your own thought,  
 An empty and a cruel sacrifice  
 Ye now prepare, for a vain idol wrought  
 Out of the fears and hate which vain desires have brought.

## XVII

“Ye seek for happiness—alas the day!  
 Ye find it not in luxury nor in gold,  
 Nor in the fame, nor in the envied sway  
 For which, O willing slaves to Custom old,  
 Severe task-mistress! ye your hearts have sold.  
 Ye seek for peace, and when ye die, to dream  
 No evil dreams; all mortal things are cold  
 And senseless then. If aught survive, I deem  
 It must be love and joy, for they immortal seem.

## XVIII

"Fear not the future, weep not for the past.  
Oh, could I win your ears to dare be now  
Glorious, and great, and calm ! that ye would cast  
Into the dust those symbols of your woe,  
Purple, and gold, and steel ! that ye would go  
Proclaiming to the nations whence ye came,  
That Want, and Plague, and Fear, from slavery flow ;  
And that mankind is free, and that the shame  
Of royalty and faith is lost in freedom's fame.

## XIX

"If thus 'tis well—if not, I come to say  
That Laon—" While the Stranger spoke, among  
The Council sudden tumult and affray  
Arose, for many of those warriors young  
Had on his eloquent accents fed and hung  
Like bees on mountain flowers ! they knew the truth,  
And from their thrones in vindication sprung ;  
The men of faith and law then without ruth  
Drew forth their secret steel, and stabbed each ardent youth.

## XX

They stabbed them in the back and sneered. A slave  
Who stood behind the throne, those corpses drew  
Each to its bloody, dark, and secret grave ;  
And one more daring raised his steel anew  
To pierce the Stranger : "What hast thou to do  
With me, poor wretch ?"—Calm, solemn, and severe,  
That voice unstrung his sinews, and he threw  
His dagger on the ground, and pale with fear,  
Sate silently—his voice then did the Stranger rear.

## XXI

"It doth avail not that I weep for ye—  
Ye cannot change, since ye are old and grey,  
And ye have chosen your lot—your fate must be  
A book of blood, whence in a milder day  
Men shall learn truth, when ye are wrapt in clay :  
Now ye shall triumph. I am Laon's friend,  
And him to your revenge will I betray,  
So ye concede one easy boon. Attend !  
For now I speak of things which ye can apprehend.

## XXII

"There is a People mighty in its youth,  
A land beyond the Oceans of the West,  
Where, though with rudest rites, Freedom and Truth  
Are worshipped ; from a glorious mother's breast  
Who, since high Athens fell, among the rest  
Sate like the Queen of Nations, but in woe,  
By inbred monsters outraged and oppressed,  
Turns to her chainless child for succour now,  
And draws the milk of power in Wisdom's fullest flow."

## XXIII

" This land is like an Eagle, whose young gaze  
 Feeds on the noontide beam, whose golden plume  
 Floats moveless on the storm, and in the blaze  
 Of sunrise gleams when earth is wrapt in gloom ;  
 An epitaph of glory for the tomb  
 Of murdered Europe may thy fame be made,  
 Great People ! As the sands shalt thou become ;  
 Thy growth is swift as morn, when night must fade ;  
 The multitudinous Earth shall sleep beneath thy shade.

## XXIV

" Yes, in the desert then is built a home  
 For Freedom. Genius is made strong to rear  
 The monuments of man beneath the dome  
 Of a new heaven ; myriads assemble there,  
 Whom the proud lords of man, in rage or fear,  
 Drive from their wasted homes. The boon I pray  
 Is this,—that Cythna shall be convoyed there,—  
 Nay, start not at the name—America !  
 And then to you this night Laon will I betray.

## XXV

" With me do what ye will. I am your foe ! "  
 The light of such a joy as makes the stare  
 Of hungry snakes like living emeralds glow,  
 Shone in a hundred human eyes.—" Where, where  
 Is Laon ? haste ! fly ! drag him swiftly here !  
 We grant thy boon."—" I put no trust in ye,  
 Swear by the Power ye dread."—" We swear, we swear ! "  
 The Stranger threw his vest back suddenly,  
 And smiled in gentle pride, and said, " Lo ! I am he !

## CANTO XII

## I

THE transport of a fierce and monstrous gladness  
 Spread through the multitudinous streets, fast flying  
 Upon the winds of fear, from his dull madness  
 The starveling waked, and died in joy ; the dying,  
 Among the corpses in stark agony lying,  
 Just heard the happy tidings, and in hope  
 Closed their faint eyes ; from house to house replying  
 With loud acclaim, the living shook Heaven's cope,  
 And filled the startled Earth with echoes : morn did open

## II

Its pale eyes then ; and lo ! the long array  
 Of guards in golden arms, and priests beside,  
 Singing their bloody hymns, whose garbs betray  
 The blackness of the faith it seems to hide ;  
 And see, the Tyrant's gem-wrought chariot glide  
 Among the gloomy crows and glittering spears—  
 A shape of light is sitting by his side,  
 A child most beautiful. I' the midst appears  
 Laon—exempt alone from mortal hopes and fears.

## III

His head and feet are bare, his hands are bound  
Behind with heavy chains, yet none do wreak  
Their scoffs on him, though myriads throng around ;  
There are no sneers upon his lip which speak  
That scorn or hate has made him bold ; his cheek  
Resolve has not turned pale,—his eyes are mild  
And calm, and like the morn about to break,  
Smile on mankind—his heart seems reconciled  
To all things and itself, like a reposing child.

## IV

Tumult was in the soul of all beside,  
Ill joy, or doubt, or fear ; but those who saw  
Their tranquil victim pass, felt wonder glide  
Into their brain, and became calm with awe.—  
See, the slow pageant near the pile doth draw.  
A thousand torches in the spacious square,  
Borne by the ready slaves of ruthless law,  
Await the signal round : the morning fair  
Is changed to a dim night by that unnatural glare.

## V

And see ! beneath a sun-bright canopy,  
Upon a platform level with the pile,  
The anxious Tyrant sit, enthroned on high,  
Girt by the chieftains of the host. All smile  
In expectation, but one child : the while  
I, Laon, led by mutes, ascend my bier  
Of fire, and look around. Each distant isle  
Is dark in the bright dawn ; towers far and near  
Pierce like reposing flames the tremulous atmosphere.

## VI

There was such silence through the host, as when  
An earthquake, trampling on some populous town,  
Has crushed ten thousand with one tread, and men  
Expect the second ; all were mute but one,  
That fairest child, who, bold with love, alone  
Stood up before the king, without avail,  
Pleading for Laon's life—her stifled groan  
Was heard—she trembled like an aspen pale  
Among the gloomy pines of a Norwegian vale.

## VII

What were his thoughts linked in the morning sun,  
Among those reptiles, stingless with delay,  
Even like a tyrant's wrath ?—the signal-gun  
Roared—hark, again ! In that dread pause he lay  
As in a quiet dream—the slaves obey—  
A thousand torches drop,—and hark, the last  
Bursts on that awful silence. Far away  
Millions, with hearts that beat both loud and fast,  
Watch for the springing flame expectant and aghast.

## VIII

They fly—the torches fall—a cry of fear  
 Has startled the triumphant!—they recede!  
 For ere the cannon's roar has died, they hear  
 The tramp of hoofs like earthquake, and a steed  
 Dark and gigantic, with a tempest's speed,  
 Bursts through their ranks: a woman sits thereo',  
 Fairer it seems than aught that earth can breed,  
 Calm, radiant, like the phantom of the dawn,  
 A spirit from the caves of daylight wandering gone.

## IX

All thought it was God's Angel come to sweep  
 The lingering guilty to their fiery grave;  
 The tyrant from his throne in dread did leap,—  
 Her innocence his child from fear did save.  
 Scared by the faith they feigned, each priestly slave  
 Knelt for his mercy whom they served with blood,  
 And, like the reflux of a mighty wave  
 Sucked into the loud sea, the multitude  
 With crushing panic fled in terror's altered mood.

## X

They pause, they blush, they gaze; a gathering shout  
 Bursts like one sound from the ten thousand streams  
 Of a tempestuous sea: that sudden rout  
 One checked, who never in his mildest dreams  
 Felt awe from grace or loveliness, the seams  
 Of his rent heart so hard and cold a creed  
 Had seared with blistering ice—but he misdeems  
 That he is wise, whose wounds do only bleed  
 Inly for self; thus thought the Iberian Priest indeed;

## XI

And others too, thought he was wise to see,  
 In pain, and fear, and hate, something divine;  
 In love and beauty—no divinity.—  
 Now with a bitter smile, whose light did shine  
 Like a fiend's hope upon his lips and cyne,  
 He said, and the persuasion of that sneer  
 Rallied his trembling comrades—"Is it mine  
 To stand alone, when kings and soldiers fear  
 A woman? Heaven has sent its other victim here."

## XII

"Were it not impious," said the King, "to break  
 Our holy oath?"—"Impious to keep it, say!"  
 Shrieked the exulting Priest:—"Slaves, to the stake  
 Bind her, and on my head the burthen lay  
 Of her just torments;—at the Judgment Day  
 Will I stand up before the golden throne  
 Of Heaven, and cry, to thee I did betray  
 An infidel! but for me she would have known  
 Another moment's joy!—the glory be thine own."

## XIII

They trembled, but replied not, nor obeyed,  
Pausing in breathless silence. Cythna sprung  
From her gigantic steed, who, like a shade  
Chased by the winds, those vacant streets among  
Fled tameless, as the brazen rein she flung  
Upon his neck, and kissed his moonèd brow.  
A piteous sight, that one so fair and young,  
The clasp of such a fearful death should woo  
With smiles of tender joy as beamed from Cythna now.

## XIV

The warm tears burst in spite of faith and fear,  
From many a tremulous eye, but, like soft dews  
Which feed spring's earliest buds, hung gathered there,  
Frozen by doubt,—alas! they could not choose  
But weep; for when her faint limbs did refuse  
To climb the pyre, upon the mutes she smiled;  
And with her eloquent gestures, and the hues  
Of her quick lips, even as a weary child  
Wins sleep from some fond nurse with its caresses mild,

## XV

She won them, though unwilling, her to bind  
Near me, among the stakes. When then had fled  
One soft reproach that was most thrilling kind,  
She smiled on me, and nothing then we said,  
But each upon the other's countenance fed  
Looks of insatiate love; the mighty veil  
Which doth divide the living and the dead  
Was almost rent, the world grew dim and pale,—  
All light in Heaven or Earth beside our love did fail.—

## XVI

Yet,—yet—one brief relapse, like the last beam  
Of dying flames, the stainless air around  
Hung silent and serene.—A blood-red gleam  
Burst upwards, hurling fiercely from the ground  
The globed smoke.—I heard the mighty sound  
Of its uprise, like a tempestuous ocean;  
And, through its chasms I saw, as in a swoond,  
The tyrant's child fall without life or motion  
Before his throne, subdued by some unseen emotion.

## XVII

And is this death? The pyre has disappeared,  
The Pestilence, the Tyrant, and the throng;  
The flames grow silent—slowly there is heard  
The music of a breath-suspending song,  
Which, like the kiss of love when life is young,  
Steeps the faint eyes in darkness sweet and deep;  
With ever-changing notes it floats along,  
Till on my passive soul there seemed to creep  
A melody, like waves on wrinkled sands that leap.



## XVIII

The warm touch of a soft and tremulous hand  
 Wakened me then ; lo, Cythna sate reclined  
 Beside me, on the waved and golden sand  
 Of a clear pool, upon a bank o'ertwined  
 With strange and star-bright flowers, which to the wind  
 Breathed divine odour ; high above, was spread  
 The emerald heaven of trees of unknown kind,  
 Whose moonlike blooms and bright fruit overhead  
 A shadow, which was light, upon the waters shed.

## XIX

And round about sloped many a lawny mountain  
 With incense-bearing forests, and vast caves  
 Of marble radiance to that mighty fountain ;  
 And where the flood its own bright margin laves,  
 Their echoes talk with its eternal waves,  
 Which, from the depths whose jagged caverns breed  
 Their unrepenting strife, it lifts and heaves,  
 Till through a chasm of hills they roll, and feed  
 A river deep, which flies with smooth but arrowy speed.

## XX

As we sate gazing in a trance of wonder,  
 A boat approached, borne by the musical air  
 Along the waves, which sung and sparkled under  
 Its rapid keel—a winged shape sate there,  
 A child with silver-shining wings, so fair,  
 That as her bark did through the waters glide,  
 The shadow of the lingering waves did wear  
 Light, as from starry beams ; from side to side,  
 While veering to the wind, her plumes the bark did guide.

## XXI

The boat was one curved shell of hollow pearl,  
 Almost translucent with the light divine  
 Of her within ; the prow and stern did curl,  
 Horned on high, like the young moon supine,  
 When, o'er dim twilight mountains dark with pine,  
 It floats upon the sunset's sea of beams,  
 Whose golden waves in many a purple line  
 Fade fast, till, borne on sunlight's ebbing streams,  
 Dilating, on earth's verge the sunken meteor gleams.

## XXII

Its keel has struck the sands beside our feet ;—  
 Then Cythna turned to me, and from her eyes  
 Which swam with unshed tears, a look more sweet  
 Than happy love, a wild and glad surprise,  
 Glanced as she spake : “ Ay, this is Paradise  
 And not a dream, and we are all united !  
 Lo, that is mine own child, who, in the guise  
 Of madness, came like day to one benighted  
 In lonesome woods : my heart is now too well requited ! ”

## XXIII

And then she wept aloud, and in her arms  
 Clasped that bright Shape, less marvellously fair  
 Than her own human hues and living charms ;  
 Which, as she leaned in passion's silence there,  
 Breathed warmth on the cold bosom of the air,  
 Which seemed to blush and tremble with delight ;  
 The glossy darkness of her streaming hair  
 Fell o'er that snowy child, and wrapt from sight  
 The fond and long embrace which did their hearts unite.

## XXIV

Then the bright child, the plumed Seraph, came,  
 And fixed its blue and beaming eyes on mine,  
 And said, " I was disturbed by tremulous shame  
 When once we met, yet knew that I was thine  
 From the same hour in which thy lips divine  
 Kindled a clinging dream within my brain,  
 Which ever waked when I might sleep, to twine  
 Thine image with *her* memory dear—again  
 We meet ; exempted now from mortal fear or pain.

## XXV

" When the consuming flames had wrapt ye round,  
 The hope which I had cherished went away ;  
 I fell in agony on the senseless ground,  
 And hid mine eyes in dust, and far astray  
 My mind was gone, when bright, like dawning day,  
 The Spectre of the Plague before me flew,  
 And breathed upon my lips, and seemed to say,  
 ' They wait for thee, beloved ! '—then I knew  
 The death-mark on my breast, and became calm anew.

## XXVI

" It was the calm of love—for I was dying.  
 I saw the black and half-extinguished pyre  
 In its own grey and shrunken ashes lying ;  
 The pitchy smoke of the departed fire  
 Still hung in many a hollow dome and spire  
 Above the towers, like night ; beneath whose shade,  
 Awed by the ending of their own desire,  
 The armies stood ; a vacancy was made  
 In expectation's depth, and so they stood dismayed.

## XXVII

" The frightful silence of that altered mood,  
 The tortures of the dying clove alone,  
 Till one uprose among the multitude,  
 And said—' The flood of time is rolling on,  
 We stand upon its brink, whilst *they* are gone  
 To glide in peace down death's mysterious stream.  
 Have ye done well ? They moulder flesh and bone,  
 Who might have made this life's envenomed dream  
 A sweeter draught than ye will ever taste, I dream

## XXVIII

" ' These perish as the good and great of yore  
 Have perished, and their murderers will repent.  
 Yes, vain and barren tears shall flow before  
 Yon smoke has faded from the firmament  
 Even for this cause, that ye, who must lament  
 The death of those that made this world so fair,  
 Cannot recall them now ; but then is lent  
 To man the wisdom of a high despair,  
 When such can die, and he live on and linger here.

## XXIX

" ' Ay, ye may fear not now the Pestilence,  
 From fabled hell as by a charm withdrawn ;  
 All power and faith must pass, since calmly hence  
 In pain and fire have unbelievers gone ;  
 And ye must sadly turn away, and moan  
 In secret, to his home each one returning ;  
 And to long ages shall this hour be known ;  
 And slowly shall its memory, ever burning,  
 Fill this dark night of things with an eternal morning

## XXX.

" ' For me the world is grown too void and cold,  
 Since hope pursues immortal destiny  
 With steps thus slow—therefore shall ye behold  
 How those who love, yet fear not, dare to die ;  
 Tell to your children this ! ' then suddenly  
 He sheathed a dagger in his heart, and fell ;  
 My brain grew dark in death, and yet to me  
 There came a murmur from the crowd to tell  
 Of deep and mighty change which suddenly befell.

## XXXI

" Then suddenly I stood a winged Thought  
 Before the immortal Senate, and the seat  
 Of that star-shining spirit, whence is wrought  
 The strength of its dominion, good and great,  
 The better Genius of this world's estate.  
 His realm around one mighty Fane is spread,  
 Elysian islands bright and fortunate,  
 Calm dwellings of the free and happy dead,  
 Where I am sent to lead ! " These winged words she said,

## XXXII

And with the silence of her eloquent smile,  
 Bade us embark in her divine canoe ;  
 Then at the helm we took our seat, the while  
 Above her head those plumes of dazzling hue  
 Into the wind's invisible stream she threw,  
 Sitting beside the prow : like gossamer,  
 On the swift breath of morn, the vessel flew  
 O'er the bright whirlpools of that fountain fair,  
 Whose shores receded fast, while we seemed lingering there ;

## XXXIII

Till down that mighty stream dark, calm, and fleet,  
Between a chasm of cedar mountains riven,  
Chased by the thronging winds, whose viewless feet  
As swift as twinkling beams, had, under Heaven,  
From woods and waves wild sounds and odours driven,  
The boat flew visibly—three nights and days,  
Borne like a cloud through morn, and noon, and even,  
We sailed along the winding watery ways  
Of the vast stream, a long and labyrinthine maze.

## XXXIV

A scene of joy and wonder to behold  
That river's shapes and shadows changing ever,  
Where the broad sunrise filled with deepening gold  
Its whirlpools, where all hues did spread and quiver,  
And where melodious falls did burst and shiver  
Among rocks clad with flowers, the foam and spray  
Sparkled like stars upon the sunny river,  
Or when the moonlight poured a holier day,  
One vast and glittering lake around green islands lay.

## XXXV

Morn, noon, and even, that boat of pearl outran  
The streams which bore it, like the arrowy cloud  
Of tempest, or the speedier thought of man,  
Which flieth forth and cannot make abode ;  
Sometimes through forests, deep like night, we glode,  
Between the walls of mighty mountains crowned  
With Cyclopean piles, whose turrets proud,  
The homes of the departed, dimly frowned  
O'er the bright waves which girt their dark foundations round.

## XXXVI

Sometimes between the wide and flowering meadows,  
Mile after mile we sailed, and 'twas delight  
To see far off the sunbeams chase the shadows  
Over the grass ; sometimes beneath the night  
Of wide and vaulted caves, whose roofs were bright  
With starry gems, we fled, whilst from their deep  
And dark green chasms, shades beautiful and white,  
Amid sweet sounds across our path would sweep  
Like swift and lovely dreams that walk the waves of sleep.

## XXXVII

And ever as we sailed, our minds were full  
Of love and wisdom ; which would overflow  
In converse wild, and sweet, and wonderful ;  
And in quick smiles whose light would come and go,  
Like music o'er wide waves, and in the flow  
Of sudden tears, and in the mute caress—  
For a deep shade was cleft, and we did know,  
That virtue, though obscured on Earth, not less  
Survives all mortal change in lasting loveliness.

## XXXVIII

Three days and nights we sailed, as thought and feeling  
Number delightful hours—for through the sky  
The sphered lamps of day and night, revealing  
New changes and new glories, rolled on high,  
Sun, Moon, and moonlike lamps, the progeny  
Of a diviner Heaven, serene and fair :  
On the fourth day, wild as a wind-wrought sea,  
The stream became, and fast and faster bare  
The spirit-wingèd boat, steadily speeding there.

## XXXIX

Steadily and swift, where the waves rolled like mountains  
Within the vast ravine, whose rifts did pour  
Tumultuous floods from their ten thousand fountains,  
The thunder of whose earth-uplifting roar  
Made the air sweep in whirlwinds from the shore,  
Calm as a shade, the boat of that fair child  
Securely fled, that rapid stress before,  
Amid the topmost spray, and sunbows wild,  
Wreathed in the silver mist : in joy and pride we smiled.

## XL

The torrent of that wide and raging river  
Is passed, and our aerial speed suspended.  
We look behind ; a golden mist did quiver  
When its wild surges with the lake were blended  
Our bark hung there, as one line suspended  
Between two heavens, that windless waveless lake ;  
Which four great cataracts from four vales, attended  
By mists, aye feed, from rocks and clouds they break,  
And of that azure sea a silent refuge make.

## XLI

Motionless resting on the lake awhile  
I saw its marge of snow-bright mountains rear  
Their peaks aloft, I saw each radiant isle,  
And in the midst, afar, even like a sphere  
Hung in one hollow sky, did there appear  
The Temple of the Spirit ; on the sound  
Which issued thence, drawn nearer and more near,  
Like the swift moon this glorious earth around,  
The charmed boat approached, and there its haven found.

## PROMETHEUS UNBOUND

## A LYRICAL DRAMA, IN FOUR ACTS

*Audisne hæc Amphiaræ, sub terram abdite ?*

## PREFACE

THE Greek tragic writers, in selecting as their subject any portion of their national history or mythology, employed in their treatment of it a certain arbitrary discretion. They by no means conceived themselves bound to adhere to the common interpretation, or to imitate in story, as in title, their rivals and predecessors. Such a system would have amounted to a resignation of those claims to preference over their competitors which incited the composition. The Agamemnonian story was exhibited on the Athenian theatre with as many variations as dramas.

I have presumed to employ a similar license. The "Prometheus Unbound" of Æschylus supposed the reconciliation of Jupiter with his victim as the price of the disclosure of the danger threatened to his empire by the consummation of his marriage with Thetis. Thetis, according to this view of the subject, was given in marriage to Peleus, and Prometheus, by the permission of Jupiter, delivered from his captivity by Hercules. Had I framed my story on this model, I should have done no more than have attempted to restore the lost drama of Æschylus; an ambition, which, if my preference to this mode of treating the subject had incited me to cherish, the recollection of the high comparison such an attempt would challenge, might well abate. But, in truth, I was averse from a catastrophe so feeble as that of reconciling the Champion with the Oppressor of mankind. The moral interest of the fable, which is so powerfully sustained by the sufferings and endurance of Prometheus, would be anni-

hilated if we could conceive of him as unsaying his high language and quailing before his successful and perfidious adversary. The only imaginary being resembling in any degree Prometheus, is Satan: and Prometheus is, in my judgment, a more poetical character than Satan, because, in addition to courage, and majesty, and firm and patient opposition to omnipotent force, he is susceptible of being described as exempt from the taints of ambition, envy, revenge, and a desire for personal aggrandisement, which, in the Hero of Paradise Lost, interfere with the interest. The character of Satan engenders in the mind a pernicious casuistry, which leads us to weigh his faults with his wrongs, and to excuse the former because the latter exceed all measure. In the minds of those who consider that magnificent fiction with a religious feeling, it engenders something worse. But Prometheus is, as it were, the type of the highest perfection of moral and intellectual nature, impelled by the purest and the truest motives to the best and noblest ends.

This Poem was chiefly written upon the mountainous ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, among the flowery glades, and thickets of odoriferous blossoming trees, which are extending in ever-winding labyrinths upon its immense platforms and dizzy arches suspended in the air. The bright blue sky of Rome, and the effect of the vigorous awakening of spring in that divinest climate, and the new life with which it drenches the spirits even to intoxication, were the inspiration of this drama.

The imagery which I have employed

will be found, in many instances, to have been drawn from the operations of the human mind, or from those external actions by which they are expressed. This is unusual in modern poetry, although Dante and Shakespeare are full of instances of the same kind : Dante indeed more than any other poet, and with greater success. But the Greek poets, as writers to whom no resource of awakening the sympathy of their contemporaries was unknown, were in the habitual use of this power ; and it is the study of their works (since a higher merit would probably be denied me), to which I am willing that my readers should impute this singularity.

One word is due in candour to the degree in which the study of contemporary writings may have tinged my composition, for such has been a topic of censure with regard to poems far more popular, and, indeed, more deservedly popular, than mine. It is impossible that any one who inhabits the same age with such writers as those who stand in the foremost ranks of our own, can conscientiously assure himself that his language and tone of thought may not have been modified by the study of the productions of those extraordinary intellects. It is true, that, not the spirit of their genius, but the forms in which it has manifested itself, are due less to the peculiarities of their own minds than to the peculiarity of the moral and intellectual condition of the minds among which they have been produced. Thus a number of writers possess the form, whilst they want the spirit of those whom, it is alleged, they imitate : because the former is the endowment of the age in which they live, and the latter must be the uncommunicated lightning of their own mind.

The peculiar style of intense and comprehensive imagery which distinguishes the modern literature of England, has not been, as a general power, the product of the imitation of any particular writer. The mass of capabilities remains at every period materially the same ; the circumstances

which awaken it to action perpetually change. If England were divided into forty republics, each equal in population and extent to Athens, there is no reason to suppose but that, under institutions not more perfect than those of Athens, each would produce philosophers and poets equal to those who (if we except Shakespeare) have never been surpassed. We owe the great writers of the golden age of our literature to that fervid awakening of the public mind which shook to dust the oldest and most oppressive form of the Christian religion. We owe Milton to the progress and development of the same spirit : the sacred Milton was, let it ever be remembered, a republican, and a bold inquirer into morals and religion. The great writers of our own age are, we have reason to suppose, the companions and forerunners of some unimagined change in our social condition, or the opinions which cement it. The cloud of mind is discharging its collected lightning, and the equilibrium between institutions and opinions is now restoring, or is about to be restored.

As to imitation, poetry is a mimetic art. It creates, but it creates by combination and representation. Poetical abstractions are beautiful and new, not because the portions of which they are composed had no previous existence in the mind of man, or in nature, but because the whole produced by their combination has some intelligible and beautiful analogy with those sources of emotion and thought, and with the contemporary condition of them : one great poet is a masterpiece of nature, which another not only ought to study but must study. He might as wisely and as easily determine that his mind should no longer be the mirror of all that is lovely in the visible universe, as exclude from his contemplation the beautiful which exists in the writings of a great contemporary. The pretence of doing it would be a presumption in any but the greatest ; the effect, even in him, would be strained, unnatural, and ineffectual. A poet

is the combined product of such internal powers as modify the nature of others; and of such external influences as excite and sustain these powers: he is not one, but both. Every man's mind is, in this respect, modified by all the objects of nature and art; by every word and every suggestion which he ever admitted to act upon his consciousness; it is the mirror upon which all forms are reflected, and in which they compose one form. Poets, not otherwise than philosophers, painters, sculptors, and musicians, are, in one sense, the creators, and, in another, the creations, of their age. From this subjection the loftiest do not escape. There is a similarity between Homer and Hesiod, between Æschylus and Euripides, between Virgil and Horace, between Dante and Petrarch, between Shakespeare and Fletcher, between Dryden and Pope; each has a generic resemblance under which their specific distinctions are arranged. If this similarity be the result of imitation, I am willing to confess that I have imitated.

Let this opportunity be conceded to me of acknowledging that I have, what a Scotch philosopher characteristically terms, "a passion for reforming the world:" what passion incited him to write and publish his book, he omits to explain. For my part, I had rather be damned with Plato and Lord Bacon, than go to heaven with Paley and Malthus. But it is a mistake to suppose that I dedicate my poetical compositions solely to the direct enforcement of reform, or that I consider them in

any degree as containing a reasoned system on the theory of human life. Didactic poetry is my abhorrence; nothing can be equally well expressed in prose that is not tedious and supererogatory in verse. My purpose has hitherto been simply to familiarise the highly refined imagination of the more select classes of poetical readers with beautiful idealisms of moral excellence; aware that until the mind can love, and admire, and trust, and hope, and endure, reasoned principles of moral conduct are seeds cast upon the highway of life, which the unconscious passenger tramples into dust, although they would bear the harvest of his happiness. Should I live to accomplish what I purpose, that is, produce a systematical history of what appear to me to be the genuine elements of human society, let not the advocates of injustice and superstition flatter themselves that I should take Æschylus rather than Plato as my model.

The having spoken of myself with unaffected freedom will need little apology with the candid; and let the uncandid consider that they injure me less than their own hearts and minds by misrepresentation. Whatever talents a person may possess to amuse and instruct others, be they ever so inconsiderable, he is yet bound to exert them: if his attempt be ineffectual, let the punishment of an unaccomplished purpose have been sufficient; let none trouble themselves to heap the dust of oblivion upon his efforts; the pile they raise will betray his grave, which might otherwise have been unknown.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

PROMETHEUS  
DEMOGORGON  
JUPITER  
The EARTH  
OCEAN  
APOLLO  
MERCURY  
HERCULES.

ASIA  
PANTHEA } *Oceanides*  
IONE  
The PHANTASM OF JUPITER  
The SPIRIT OF THE EARTH  
The SPIRIT OF THE MOON  
SPIRITS OF THE HOURS  
SPIRITS ECHOES FAUNS  
FURIES



## ACT I

SCENE.—*A Ravine of Icy Rocks in the Indian Caucasus. PROMETHEUS is discovered bound to the Precipice. PANTHEA and IONE are seated at his feet. Time, Night. During the Scene, Morning slowly breaks.*

*Prometheus.* Monarch of Gods and  
Dæmons, and all Spirits

But One, who throng those bright  
and rolling worlds

Which Thou and I alone of living  
things

Behold with sleepless eyes! regard  
this Earth

Made multitudinous with thy slaves,  
whom thou

Requitest for knee-worship, prayer,  
and praise,

And toil, and hecatombs of broken  
hearts,

With fear and self-contempt and  
barren hope.

Whilst me, who am thy foe, eyeless  
in hate,

Hast thou made reign and triumph,  
to thy scorn,

O'er mine own misery and thy vain  
revenge.

Three thousand years of sleep-  
unsheltered hours,

And moments aye divided by keen  
pangs

Till they seemed years, torture and  
solitude,

Scorn and despair,—these are mine  
empire.

More glorious far than that which  
thou surveyest

From thine unenvied throne, O  
Mighty God!

Almighty, had I deigned to share the  
shame

Of thine ill tyranny, and hung not  
here

Nailed to this wall of eagle-baffling  
mountain,

Black, wintry, dead, unmeasured;  
without herb,

Insect, or beast, or shape or sound of  
life.

Ah me, alas! pain, pain even, for ever!

No change, no pause, no hope! Yet I  
endure.

I ask the Earth, have not the moun-  
tains felt?

I ask yon Heaven, the all-beholding  
Sun,

Has it not seen? The Sea, in storm  
or calm,

Heaven's ever-changing Shadow,  
spread below,

Have its deaf waves not heard my  
agony?

Ah me! alas, pain, pain ever, for ever!

The crawling glaciers pierce me with  
the spears

Of their moon-freezing crystals; the  
bright chains

Eat with their burning cold into my  
bones.

Heaven's winged hound, polluting  
from thy lips

His beak in poison not his own, tears  
up

My heart; and shapeless sights come  
wandering by,

The ghastly people of the realm of  
dream,

Mocking me: and the Earthquake-  
fiends are charged

To wrench the rivets from my quiver-  
ing wounds

When the rocks split and close again  
behind:

While from their loud abysses howl-  
ing throng

The genii of the storm, urging the  
rage

Of whirlwind, and afflict me with  
keen hail.

And yet to me welcome is day and  
night,

Whether one breaks the hoar frost of  
the morn,

Or starry, dim, and slow, the other  
climbs

The leaden-coloured east; for then  
they lead

The wingless, crawling hours, one  
among whom

—As some dark Priest ~~hales~~ the reluc-  
tant victim—

Shall drag thee, cruel King, to kiss  
the blood

From these pale feet, which then  
might trample thee

If they disdained, not such a pros-  
trate slave.

Disdain ! Ah no ! I pity thee. What ruin

Will hunt thee undefended through the wide Heaven !

How will thy soul, cloven to its depth with terror,

Gape like a hell within ! I speak in grief,

Not exultation, for I hate no more, As then ere misery made me wise.

The curse  
Once breathed on thee I would recall.

Ye Mountains,  
Whose many-voiced Echoes, through the mist

Of cataracts, flung the thunder of that spell !

Ye icy Springs, stagnant with wrinkling frost,

Which vibrated to hear me, and then crept

Shuddering through India ! Thou serenest Air,

Through which the Sun walks burning without beams !

And ye swift Whirlwinds, who on poised wings

Hung mute and moveless o'er yon hushed abyss,

As thunder, louder than your own, made rock

The orb'd world ! If then my words had power,

Though I am changed so that aught evil wish

Is dead within ; although no memory be

Of what is hate, let them not lose it now !

What was that curse ? for ye all heard me speak.

FIRST VOICE : (*from the mountains*).  
Thrice three hundred thousand years

O'er the Earthquake's couch we stood

Oft, as men convulsed with fears,  
We trembled in our multitude.

SECOND VOICE : (*from the springs*).  
Thunderbolts had parched our water,

We had been stained with bitter blood,

And had run mute, 'mid shrieks of slaughter,

Through a city and a solitude.

THIRD VOICE : (*from the air*).  
I had clothed, since Earth uprose

Its wastes in colours not their own ;  
And oft had my serene repose

Been cloven by many a rending groan.

FOURTH VOICE : (*from the whirlwinds*).  
We had soared beneath these mountains

Unresting ages ; nor had thunder,  
Nor yon volcano's flaming fountains,

Nor any power above or under,  
Ever made us mute with wonder.

FIRST VOICE.  
But never bowed our snowy crest  
As at the voice of thine unrest.

SECOND VOICE.  
Never such a sound before  
To the Indian waves we bore.  
A pilot asleep on the howling sea  
Leaped up from the deck in agony,  
And heard, and cried, " Ah, woe is me !"  
And died as mad as the wild waves be.

THIRD VOICE.  
By such dread words from Earth to Heaven  
My still realm was never riven :  
When its wound was closed, there stood  
Darkness o'er the day like blood.

FOURTH VOICE.  
And we shrank back : for dreams of ruin  
To frozen caves our flight pursuing  
Made us keep silence—thus—and thus—  
Though silence is as hell to us.

The Earth. The tongueless Caverns  
of the craggy hills  
Cried, " Misery ! " then ; the hollow  
Heaven replied,  
" Misery ! " And the Ocean's purple waves,  
Climbing the land, howled to the lashing winds,  
And the pale nations heard it, " Misery ! "

Prometheus. I hear a sound of voices : not the voice  
Which I gave forth. Mother, thy sons and thou

Scorn him, without whose all-enduring will  
[Jove,

Beneath the fierce omnipotence of  
Both they and thou had vanished, like  
thin mist

Unrolled on the morning wind. Know  
ye not me,

The Titan? He who made his agony  
The barrier to your else all-conquering  
foe?

Oh, rock-embosomed lawns, and  
snow-fed streams,

Now seen athwart frore vapours,  
deep below,

Through whose o'ershadowing woods  
I wandered once

With Asia, drinking life from her  
loved eyes;

Why scorns the spirit which informs  
ye, now

To commune with me? me alone,  
who checked,

As one who checks a fiend-drawn  
charioteer,

The falsehood and the force of him  
who reigns

Supreme, and with the groans of  
pining slaves

Fills your dim glens and liquid wilder-  
nesses:

Why answer ye not, still, Breth-  
ren?

*The Earth.* They dare not.

*Prometheus.* Who dares? for I  
would hear that curse again.

Ha! what an awful whisper rises up!  
'Tis scarce like sound: it tingles

through the frame  
As lightning tingles, hovering ere it

strike.  
Speak, Spirit! from thine inorganic

voice  
I only know that thou art moving

near  
And love. How cursed I him!

*The Earth.* How canst thou hear,  
Who knowest not the language of the

dead?

*Prometheus.* Thou art a living

spirit; speak as they.

*The Earth.* I dare not speak like

life, lest Heaven's fell King

Should hear, and link me to some

wheel of pain

More torturing than the one whereon  
I roll.

Subtle thou art and good; and  
though the Gods

Hear not this voice, yet thou art more  
than God

Being wise and kind: earnestly  
hearken now.

*Prometheus.* Obscurely through my  
brain, like shadows dim,

Sweep awful thoughts, rapid and  
thick. I feel

Faint, like one mingled in entwining  
love;

Yet 'tis not pleasure.

*The Earth.* No, thou canst not  
hear

Thou art immortal, and this tongue is  
known

Only to those who die.

*Prometheus.* And what art thou,  
O melancholy Voice?

*The Earth.* I am the Earth,  
Thy mother; she within those stony

veins,  
To the last fibre of the loftiest tree

Whose thin leaves trembled in the  
frozen air,

Joy ran, as blood within a living  
frame,

When thou didst from her bosom, like  
a cloud

Of glory, arise, a spirit of keen joy!  
And at thy voice her pining sons up-  
lifted

Their prostrate brows from the pol-  
luting dust,

And our almighty Tyrant with fierce  
dread

Grew pale, until his thunder chained  
thee here.

Then, see those million worlds which  
burn and roll,

Around us: their inhabitants beheld  
My sphered light wane in wide Hea-  
ven; the sea

Was lifted by strange tempest, and  
new fire

From earthquake-rifted moun-  
tains

of bright snow  
Shook its portentous hair beneath

Heaven's frown;  
Lightning and Inundation vexed the

plains;  
Blue thistles bloomed in cities; food-  
less toads

Within voluptuous chambers pant-  
ing crawled;

When Plague had fallen on man,  
 and beast, and worm,  
 And Famine ; and black blight on  
 herb and tree ;  
 And in the corn, and vines, and mea-  
 dow-grass,  
 Teemed ineradicable poisonous weeds  
 Draining their growth, for my wan  
 breast was dry  
 With grief ; and the thin air, my  
 breath, was stained  
 With the contagion of a mother's hate  
 Breathed on her child's destroyer ; ay,  
 I heard  
 Thy curse, the which, if thou remem-  
 berest not,  
 Yet my innumerable seas and streams,  
 Mountains and caves, and winds, and  
 yon wide air,  
 And the inarticulate people of the  
 dead,  
 Preserve, a treasured spell. We  
 meditate [words  
 In secret joy and hope those dreadful  
 But dare not speak them.

*Prometheus.* Venerable mother !  
 All else who live and suffer take from  
 thee  
 Some comfort ; flowers, and fruits,  
 and happy sounds,  
 And love, though fleeting ; these  
 may not be mine.  
 But mine own words, I pray, deny me  
 not.

*The Earth.* They shall be told. Ere  
 Babylon was dust,  
 The Magus Zoroaster, my dear child,  
 Met his own image walking in the gar-  
 den.  
 That apparition, sole of men, he saw.  
 For know there are two worlds of life  
 and death :  
 One that which thou beholdest ; but  
 the other  
 Is underneath the grave, where do in-  
 habit  
 The shadows of all forms that think  
 and live  
 Till death unite them and they part  
 no more ;  
 Dreams and the light imaginings of  
 men,  
 And all that faith creates or love de-  
 sires,  
 Terrible, strange, sublime and beau-  
 teous shapes.

There thou art, and dost hang, a  
 writhing shade,  
 'Mid whirlwind-peopled mountains ;  
 all the gods  
 Are there, and all the powers of name-  
 less worlds,  
 Vast, sceptred phantoms ; heroes,  
 men, and beasts ;  
 And Demogorgon, a tremendous  
 gloom ;  
 And he, the supreme Tyrant, on his  
 throne  
 Of burning gold. Son, one of these  
 shall utter  
 The curse which all remember. Call  
 at will  
 Thine own ghost, or the ghost of  
 Jupiter,  
 Hades or Typhon, or what mightier  
 Gods  
 From all-prolific Evil, since thy ruin  
 Have sprung, and trampled on my  
 prostrate sons.  
 Ask, and they must reply : so the re-  
 venge  
 Of the Supreme may sweep through  
 vacant shades,  
 As rainy wind through the abandoned  
 gate  
 Of a fallen palace.

*Prometheus.* Mother, let not aught  
 Of that which may be evil, pass again  
 My lips, or those of aught resembling  
 me.  
 Phantasm of Jupiter, arise, appear !

IONE.

My wings are folded o'er mine ears :  
 My wings are crossed o'er mine  
 eyes :  
 Yet through their silver shade ap-  
 pears,  
 And through their lulling plumes  
 arise,  
 A Shape, a throng of sounds ;  
 May it be no ill to thee  
 O thou of many wounds !  
 Near whom, for our sweet sister's  
 sake,  
 Ever thus we watch and wake.

PANTHEA.

The sound is of whirlwind under-  
 ground,  
 Earthquake, and fire and moun-  
 tains cloven  
 The shape is awful like the sound,

Clothed in dark purple, star-in-woven.

A sceptre of pale gold  
To stay steps proud, o'er the slow cloud

His veined hand doth hold,  
Cruel he looks, but calm and strong,  
Like one who does, not suffers wrong.

*Phantasm of Jupiter.* Why have  
the secret powers of this strange world

Driven me, a frail and empty phan-  
tom, hither

On direst storms? What unaccus-  
tomed sounds

Are hovering on my lips, unlike the  
voice

With which our pallid race hold  
ghastly talk

In darkness? And, proud sufferer,  
who art thou?

*Prometheus.* Tremendous Image!  
as thou art must be

He whom thou shadowest forth. I  
am his foe,

The Titan. Speak the words which I  
would hear,

Although no thought inform thine  
empty voice.

*The Earth.* Listen! And though  
your echoes must be mute.

Grey mountains, and old woods, and  
haunted springs,

Prophetic caves, and isle-surround-  
ing streams,

Rejoice to hear what yet ye cannot  
speak.

*Phantasm.* A spirit seizes me and  
speaks within: [cloud.

It tears me as fire tears a thunder-  
*Panthea.* See, how he lifts his

mighty looks, the Heaven

Darkens above.

*Ione.* He speaks! O shelter me!

*Prometheus.* I see the curse on ges-  
tures proud and cold,

And looks of firm defiance, and calm  
hate,

And such despair as mocks itself with  
smiles,

Written as on a scroll: yet speak:  
Oh speak!

PHANTASM.

Fiend, I defy thee! with a calm,  
fixed mind,

All that thou canst inflict I bid  
thee do;

Foul Tyrant both of Gods and  
Human-kind,

One only being shalt thou not  
subdue.

Rain then thy plagues upon me  
here,

Ghastly disease, and frenzying  
fear;

And let alternate frost and fire

Eat into me, and be thine ire

Lightning, and cutting hail, and  
legioned forms

Of furies, driving by upon the  
wounding storms.

Ay, do thy worst. Thou art omni-  
potent.

O'er all things but thyself I  
gave thee power,

And my own will. Be thy swift  
mischiefs sent

To blast mankind, from yon  
ethereal tower.

Let thy malignant spirit move

In darkness over those I love:

On me and mine I imprecate

The utmost torture of thy hate;

And thus devote to sleepless agony,  
This undeclining head while thou

must reign on high.

But thou, who art the God and  
Lord: O thou

Who fillest with thy soul this  
world of woe,

To whom all things of Earth and  
Heaven do bow

In fear and worship: all-pre-  
vailing foe!

I curse thee! let a sufferer's curse  
Clasp thee, his torturer, like re-  
morse!

Till thine Infinity shall be

A robe of envenomed agony;

And thine Omnipotence a crown of  
pain,

To cling like burning gold round thy  
dissolving brain.

Heap on thy soul, by virtue of this  
curse,

Ill deeds, then be thou damned,  
beholding good;

Both infinite as is the universe,

And thou, and thy self-torturing  
solitude.

An awful image of calm power  
Though now thou sittest, let the  
hour  
Come, when thou must appear to be  
That which thou art internally.  
And after many a false and fruitless  
crime,  
Scorn track thy lagging fall through  
boundless space and time.

*Prometheus.* Were these my words,  
O Parent?

*The Earth.* They were thine.

*Prometheus.* It doth repent me :  
words are quick and vain :  
Grief for awhile is blind, and so was  
mine.

I wish no living thing to suffer pain.

THE EARTH.

Misery ! Oh misery to me,  
That Jove at length should vanquish  
thee.

Wail, howl aloud, Land and Sea,  
The Earth's rent heart shall answer ye.  
Howl, Spirits of the living and the  
dead,

Your refuge, your defence lies fallen  
and vanquished.

FIRST ECHO.

Lies fallen and vanquished ?

SECOND ECHO.

Fallen and vanquished !

IONE.

Fear not : 'tis but some passing  
spasm,

The Titan is unvanquished still.  
But see, where through the azure  
chasm

Of yon forked and snowy hill  
Trampling the slant winds on high  
With golden-sandalled feet, that  
glow

Under plumes of purple dye,  
Like rose-ensanguined ivory,  
A Shape comes now,  
Stretching on high from his right  
hand

A serpent-cinctured wand.

*Panthea.* 'Tis Jove's world-wan-  
dering herald, Mercury.

IONE.

And who are those with hydra  
tresses

And iron wings that climb the wind,  
Whom the frowning God represses  
Like vapours steaming up be-  
hind,  
Clanging loud, an endless crowd—

PANTHEA.

These are Jove's tempest-walk-  
ing hounds,  
Whom he gluts with groans and  
blood,

When charioted on sulphurous  
cloud

He bursts Heaven's bounds.

IONE.

Are they now led, from the thin  
dead

On new pangs to be fed ?

*Panthea.* The Titan looks as ever,  
firm, not proud.

*First Fury.* Ha ! I scent life !

*Second Fury.* Let me but look  
into his eyes !

*Third Fury.* The hope of torturing  
him smells like a heap

Of corpses, to a death-bird after battle.

*First Fury.* Darest thou delay, O  
Herald ! take cheer, Hounds

Of Hell : what if the Son of Maia soon  
Should make us food and sport—who  
can please long

The Omnipotent ?

*Mercury.* Back to your towers  
of iron,

And gnash beside the streams of fire,  
and wail

Your foodless teeth. Geryon, arise !  
and Gorgon,

Chimæra, and thou Sphinx, subtlest  
of fiends,

Who ministered to Thebes Heaven's  
poisoned wine,

Unnatural love, and more unnatural  
hate :

These shall perform your task.

*First Fury.* Oh, mercy ! mercy !  
We die with our desire : drive us not  
back !

*Mercury.* Crouch then in silence.

Awful Sufferer !  
To thee unwilling, most unwillingly

I come, by the Great Father's will  
driven down,

To execute a doom of new revenge.  
Alas ! I pity thee, and hate myself

That I can do no more : aye from thy sight  
 Returning, for a season, heaven seems hell,  
 So thy worn form pursues me night and day,  
 Smiling reproach. Wise art thou, firm and good,  
 But vainly wouldst stand forth alone in strife  
 Against the Omnipotent ; as yon clear lamps  
 That measure and divide the weary years  
 From which there is no refuge, long have taught,  
 And long must teach. Even now thy Torturer arms  
 With the strange might of unimagined pains  
 The powers who scheme slow agonies in Hell,  
 And my commission is to lead them here,  
 Or what more subtle, foul, or savage fiends  
 People the abyss, and leave them to their task.  
 Be it not so ! there is a secret known  
 To thee, and to none else of living things,  
 Which may transfer the sceptre of wide Heaven,  
 The fear of which perplexes the Supreme ; [throne  
 Clothe it in words, and bid it clasp his  
 In intercession ; bend thy soul in prayer,  
 And like a suppliant in some gorgeous fane,  
 Let the will kneel within thy haughty heart :  
 For benefits and meek submission tame  
 The fiercest and the mightiest.  
*Prometheus.* Evil minds  
 Change good to their own nature. I gave all  
 He has ; and in return he chains me here  
 Years, ages, night and day ; whether the Sun  
 Split my parched skin, or in the moony night  
 The crystal-winged snow cling round my hair :

Whilst my beloved race is trampled down  
 By his thought-executing ministers.  
 Such is the tyrant's recompense : 'tis just :  
 He who is evil can receive no good ;  
 And for a world bestowed, or a friend lost,  
 He can feel hate, fear, shame ; not gratitude :  
 He but requites me for his own misdeed.  
 Kindness to such is keen reproach which breaks  
 With bitter stings the light sleep of Revenge.  
 Submission, thou dost know I cannot try ;  
 For what submission but that fatal word,  
 The death-seal of mankind's captivity,  
 Like the Sicilian's hair-suspended sword,  
 Which trembles o'er his crown, would he accept,  
 Or could I yield ? Which yet I will not yield.  
 Let others flatter Crime, where it sits throned  
 In brief Omnipotence ; secure are they :  
 For Justice, when triumphant, will weep down  
 Pity, not punishment, on her own wrongs,  
 Too much avenged by those who err. I wait,  
 Enduring thus, the retributive hour  
 Which since we spake is even nearer now.  
 But hark, the hell-hounds clamour. Fear delay !  
 Behold ! Heaven lowers under thy father's frown.  
*Mercury.* Oh, that we might be spared : I to inflict,  
 And thou to suffer ! once more answer me :  
 Thou knowest not the period of Jove's power ?  
*Prometheus.* I know but this, that it must come.  
*Mercury.* Alas !  
 Thou canst not count thy years to come of pain ?

*Prometheus.* They last while Jove  
must reign ; nor more, nor less  
Do I desire or fear.

*Mercury.* Yet pause, and plunge  
Into Eternity, where recorded time,  
Even all that we imagine, age on age,  
Seems but a point, and the reluctant  
mind

Flags, wearily in its unending flight,  
Till it sink, dizzy, blind, lost, shelter-  
less ;

Perchance it has not numbered the  
slow years

Which thou must spend in torture,  
unreprieved ?

*Prometheus.* Perchance no thought  
can count them, yet they pass.

*Mercury.* If thou mightst dwell  
among the Gods the while,  
Lapped in voluptuous joy ?

*Prometheus.* I would not quit  
This bleak ravine, these unrepentant  
pains.

*Mercury.* Alas ! I wonder at, yet  
pity thee.

*Prometheus.* Pity the self-despising  
slaves of Heaven,  
Not me, within whose mind sits peace  
serene,

As light in the sun, throned : how  
vain is talk !

Call up the fiends.

*Ione.* O, sister, look ! White fire  
Has cloven to the roots yon huge  
snow-loaded cedar ;  
How fearfully God's thunder howls  
behind !

*Mercury.* I must obey his words  
and thine : alas !  
Most heavily remorse hangs at my  
heart !

*Panthea.* See where the child of  
Heaven, with winged feet,  
Runs down the slanted sunlight of the  
dawn.

*Ione.* Dear sister, close thy plumes  
over thine eyes

Lest thou behold and die : they come :  
they come

Blackening the birth of day with  
countless wings,

And hollow underneath, like death.

*First Fury.* Prometheus !

*Second Fury.* Immortal Titan !

*Third Fury.* Champion of Hea-  
ven's slaves !

*Prometheus.* He whom some dread-  
ful voice invokes is here,  
Prometheus, the chained Titan. Hor-  
rible forms,

What and who are ye ? Never yet  
there came

Phantasms so foul through monster-  
teeming Hell

From the all-miscreative brain of  
Jove ;

While I behold such execrable shapes,  
Methinks I grow like what I contem-  
plate,

And laugh and stare in loathsome  
sympathy.

*First Fury.* We are the ministers of  
pain and fear,

And disappointment, and mistrust,  
and hate,

And clinging crime ; and as lean dogs  
pursue

Through wood and lake some struck  
and sobbing fawn,

We track all things that weep, and  
bleed, and live,

When the great King betrays them to  
our will.

*Prometheus.* Oh ! many fearful  
natures in one name,

I know ye ; and these lakes and  
echoes know

The darkness and the clangour of  
your wings.

But why more hideous than your  
loathed selves

Gather ye up in legions from the deep ?

*Second Fury.* We knew not that .  
Sisters, rejoice, rejoice !

*Prometheus.* Can aught exult in its  
deformity ?

*Second Fury.* The beauty of de-  
light makes lovers glad,

Gazing on one another : so are we,  
As from the rose which the pale priest-  
ess kneels

To gather for her festal crown of  
flowers

The aerial crimson falls, flushing her  
cheek,

So from our victim's destined agony  
The shade which is our own in-  
vests us round,

Else we are shapeless as our mother  
Night.

*Prometheus.* I laugh your power,  
and his who sent you here,



To lowest scorn. Pour forth the cup  
of pain.

*First Fury.* Thou thinkest we will  
rend thee bone from bone,  
And nerve from nerve, working like  
fire within?

*Prometheus.* Pain is my element,  
as hate is thine;

Ye rend me now: I care not.

*Second Fury.* Dost imagine  
We will but laugh into thy lidless eyes?

*Prometheus.* I weigh not what  
ye do, but what ye suffer,  
Being evil. Cruel was the power  
which called

You, or aught else so wretched, into  
light.

*Third Fury.* Thou thinkst we will  
live through thee, one by one,  
Like animal life, and though we can  
obscure not

The soul which burns within, that we  
will dwell

Beside it, like a vain loud multitude  
Vexing the self-content of wisest men:

That we will be dread thought be-  
neath thy brain,

And foul desire round thine aston-  
ished heart,

And blood within thy labyrinthine  
veins

Crawling like agony.

*Prometheus.* Why, ye are thus now;  
Yet am I king over myself, and rule  
The torturing and conflicting throngs  
within,  
As Jove rules you when Hell grows  
mutinous.

#### CHORUS OF FURIES.

From the ends of the earth, from the  
ends of the earth,

Where the night has its grave and  
the morning its birth,

Come, come, come!

Oh, ye who shake hills with the scream  
of your mirth,

When cities sink howling in ruin;  
and ye

Who with wingless footsteps trample  
the sea,

And close upon Shipwreck and Fam-  
ine's track,

Sit chattering with joy on the foodless  
wreck;

Come, come, come!

Leave the bed, low, cold, and red,  
Strewed beneath a nation dead;

Leave the hatred, as in ashes  
Fire is left for future burning:

It will burst in bloodier flashes  
When ye stir it, soon returning:

Leave the self-contempt im-  
planted

In young spirits, sense-en-  
chanted,

Misery's yet unkindled fuel:  
Leave Hell's secrets half un-  
chanted,

To the maniac dreamer: cruel  
More than ye can be with hate  
Is he with fear.

Come, come, come!

We are steaming up from Hell's  
wide gate,

And we burthen the blasts of the  
atmosphere,

But vainly we toil till ye come  
here.

*Ione.* Sister, I hear the thunder of  
new wings.

*Panthea.* These solid mountains  
quiver with the sound

Even as the tremulous air: their  
shadows make

The space within my plumes more  
black than night.

#### FIRST FURY.

Your call was as a winged car,  
Driven on whirlwinds fast and  
far;

It rapt us from red gulfs of war.

#### SECOND FURY.

From wide cities, famine wasted;

#### THIRD FURY.

Groans half-heard, and blood  
untasted,

#### FOURTH FURY.

Kingly conclaves, stern and cold,  
Where blood with gold is bought  
and sold;

#### FIFTH FURY.

From the furnace, white and hot,  
In which—

#### A FURY.

Speak not; whisper not:  
I know all that ye would tell,

But to speak might break the spell

Which must bend the Invincible,  
The stern of thought ;

He yet defies the deepest power  
of Hell.

*Fury.* Tear the veil !

*Another Fury.*

It is torn.

CHORUS.

The pale stars of the morn  
Shine on a misery, dire to be borne.  
Dost thou faint, mighty Titan ? We  
laugh thee to scorn.

Dost thou boast the clear knowledge  
thou waken'dst for man ?

Then was kindled within him a thirst  
which outran

Those perishing waters ; a thirst of  
fierce fever,

Hope, love, doubt, desire, which con-  
sume him for ever.

One came forth of gentle worth  
Smiling on the sanguine earth :

His words outhved him, like  
swift poison

Withering up truth, peace,  
and pity.

Look ! where round the wide hor-  
rizon

Many a million-peopled city  
Vomits smoke in the bright air.

Mark that outcry of despair !  
'Tis his mild and gentle ghost

Wailing for the faith he kindled :  
Look again ! the flames almost

To a glow-worm's lamp have  
dwindled :

The survivors round the embers  
Gather in dread.

Joy, joy, joy !

Past ages crowd on thee, but each one  
remembers ;

And the future is dark, and the pres-  
ent is spread

Like a pillow of thorns for thy slum-  
berless head.

SEMICHORUS I.

Drops of bloody agony flow  
From his white and quivering brow.

Grant a little respite now :  
See ! a disenchanted nation

Springs like day from desolation ;  
To Truth its state is dedicate,

And Freedom leads it forth, her  
mate ;

A legioned band of linked brothers,  
Whom Love calls children—

SEMICHORUS II.

'Tis another's.

See how kindred murder kin !

'Tis the vintage-time for death and  
sin.

Blood, like new wine, bubbles with-  
in :

Till Despair smothers

The struggling world, which slaves  
and tyrants win.

[*All the FURIES vanish, except one.*

*Ione.* Hark, sister ! what a low yet  
dreadful groan

Quite unsuppressed is tearing up the  
heart

Of the good Titan, as storms tear the  
deep,

And beasts hear the sea moan in in-  
land caves.

Darest thou observe how the fiends  
torture him ?

*Panthea.* Alas ! I looked forth  
twice, but will no more.

*Ione.* What didst thou see ?

*Panthea.* A woful sight : a youth  
With patient looks nailed to a crucifix.

*Ione.* What next ?

*Panthea.* The heaven around, the  
earth below

Was peopled with thick shapes of  
human death,

All horrible, and wrought by human  
hands,

And some appeared the work of  
human hearts,

For men were slowly killed by frowns  
and smiles :

And other sights too foul to speak  
and live

Were wandering by. Let us not  
tempt worse fear

By looking forth : those groans are  
grief enough.

*Fury.* Behold an emblem : those  
who do endure

Deep wrongs for man, and scorn, and  
chains, but heap

Thousandfold torment on themselves  
and him.

*Prometheus.* Remit the anguish of  
that lighted stare ;

Close those wan lips ; let that thorn-  
wounded brow

Stream not with blood ; it mingles  
with thy tears !  
Fix, fix those tortured orbs in peace  
and death,  
So thy sick throes shake not that  
crucifix,  
So those pale fingers play not with  
thy gore.  
O, horrible ! Thy name I will not  
speak,  
It hath become a curse. I see, I see  
The wise, the mild, the lofty, and the  
just,  
Whom thy slaves hate for being like  
to thee,  
Some hunted by foul lies from their  
heart's home,  
An early-chosen, late-lamented home,  
As hooded ounces cling to the driven  
hind ;  
Some linked to corpses in unwhole-  
some cells :  
Some—Hear I not the multitude  
laugh loud ?—  
Impaled in lingering fire : and mighty  
realms [isles,  
Float by my feet, like sea-uprooted  
Whose sons are kneaded down in  
common blood  
By the red light of their own burning  
homes.  
*Fury.* Blood thou canst see, and  
fire ; and canst hear groans :  
Worse things unheard, unseen, re-  
main behind.  
*Prometheus.* Worse ?  
*Fury.* In each human  
heart terror survives  
The ravin it has gorged : the loftiest  
fear  
All that they would disdain to think  
were true :  
Hypocrisy and custom make their  
minds  
The fanes of many a worship, now  
outworn.  
They dare not devise good for man's  
estate,  
And yet they know not that they do  
not dare.  
The good want power, but to weep  
barren tears.  
The powerful goodness want : worse  
need for them.  
The wise want love ; and those who  
love want wisdom ;

And all best things are thus confused  
to ill.  
Many are strong and rich, and would  
be just,  
But live among their suffering fellow-  
men  
As if none felt : they know not what  
they do.  
*Prometheus.* Thy words are like a  
cloud of winged snakes ;  
And yet I pity those they torture not.  
*Fury.* Thou pitiest them ? I  
speak no more ! [*Vanishes.*  
*Prometheus.* Ah woe !  
Ah woe ! Alas ! pain, pain ever, for  
ever !  
I close my tearless eyes, but see more  
clear  
Thy works within my woe-illuminated  
mind,  
Thou subtle tyrant ! Peace is in the  
grave.  
The grave hides all things beautiful  
and good :  
I am a God and cannot find it there,  
Nor would I seek it : for, though  
dread revenge, tory.  
This is defeat, fierce king ! not vic-  
The sights with which thou torturest  
gird my soul  
With new endurance, till the hour  
arrives  
When they shall be no types of things  
which are.  
*Panthea.* Alas ! what sawest thou ?  
*Prometheus.* There are two woes :  
To speak and to behold ; thou spare  
me one.  
Names are there, Nature's sacred  
watchwords, they  
Were borne aloft in bright emblaz-  
onry ;  
The nations thronged around, and  
cried aloud,  
As with one voice, Truth, liberty, and  
love !  
Suddenly fierce confusion fell from  
heaven  
Among them : there was strife, de-  
ceit, and fear :  
Tyrants rushed in, and did divide the  
spoil.  
This was the shadow of the truth I  
saw.  
*The Earth.* I felt thy torture, son,  
with such mixed joy

As pain and virtue give. To cheer  
thy state  
I bid ascend those subtle and fair  
spirits,  
Whose homes are the dim caves of  
human thought,  
And who inhabit, as birds wing the  
wind,  
Its world-surrounding ether: they  
behold  
Beyond that twilight realm, as in a  
glass,  
The future: may they speak com-  
fort to thee!

*Panthea.* Look, sister, where a  
troop of spirits gather,  
Like flocks of clouds in spring's de-  
lightful weather,  
Thronging in the blue air!

*Ione.* And see! more come,  
Like fountain-vapours when the  
winds are dumb,  
That climb up the ravine in scattered  
lines.

And hark! is it the music of the pines?  
Is it the lake? Is it the waterfall?

*Panthea.* 'Tis something sadder,  
sweeter far than all.

#### CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

From unremembered ages we  
Gentle guides and guardians be  
Of heaven-oppressed mortality!  
And we breathe, and sicken not,  
The atmosphere of human thought:  
Be it dim, and dank, and grey,  
Like a storm-extinguished day,  
Travelled o'er by dying gleams:

Be it bright as all between  
Cloudless skies and windless streams,  
Silent, liquid, and serene;  
As the birds within the wind,

As the fish within the wave,  
As the thoughts of man's own mind  
Float through all above the grave:

We make there our liquid lair,  
Voyaging cloudlike and unpent  
Through the boundless element:  
Thence we bear the prophecy  
Which begins and ends in thee!

*Ione.* More yet come, one by one:  
the air around them  
Looks radiant as the air around a star.

#### FIRST SPIRIT.

On a battle-trumpet's blast  
I fled hither, fast, fast, fast,

'Mid the darkness upward cast.  
From the dust of creeds outworn,  
From the tyrant's banner torn,  
Gathering round me, onward borne,  
There was mingled many a cry—  
Freedom! Hope! Death! Victory!  
Till they faded through the sky;  
And one sound above, around,  
One sound beneath, around, above,  
Was moving; 'twas the soul of love;  
'Twas the hope, the prophecy,  
Which begins and ends in thee.

#### SECOND SPIRIT.

A rainbow's arch stood on the sea,  
Which rocked beneath, immovably;  
And the triumphant storm did flee,  
Like a conqueror, swift and proud,  
Between with many a captive cloud,  
A shapeless, dark and rapid crowd,  
Each by lightning riven in half:  
I heard the thunder hoarsely laugh:  
Mighty fleets were strewn like chaff  
And spread beneath a hell of death  
O'er the white waters. I alit  
On a great ship lightning-split,  
And speeded hither on the sigh  
Of one who gave an enemy  
His plank, then plunged aside to die.

#### THIRD SPIRIT.

I sate beside a sage's bed,  
And the lamp was burning red  
Near the book where he had fed,  
When a Dream with plumes of flame,  
To his pillow hovering came,  
And I knew it was the same  
Which had kindled long ago  
Pity, eloquence, and woe;  
And the world awhile below  
Wore the shade its lustre made.  
It has borne me here as fleet  
As Desire's lightning feet:  
I must ride it back ere morrow,  
Or the sage will wake in sorrow.

#### FOURTH SPIRIT.

On a poet's lips I slept  
Dreaming like a love-adept  
In the sound his breathing kept;  
Nor seeks nor finds he mortal blisses,  
But feeds on the aerial kisses  
Of shapes that haunt thought's  
wildernesses.  
He will watch from dawn to gloom  
The lake-reflected sun illumine

The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom,  
Nor heed nor see, what things they be  
But from these create he can  
Forms more real than living man,  
Nurslings of immortality !  
One of these awakened me,  
And I sped to succour thee.

*Ione.* Beholdst thou not two  
shapes from the east and west  
Come, as two doves to one beloved  
nest,

Twin nurslings of the all-sustaining  
air,

On swift still wings glide down the  
atmosphere ?

And, hark ! their sweet sad voices !  
'tis despair

Mingled with love and then dissolved  
in sound.

*Panthea.* Canst thou speak, sister ?  
all my words are drowned.

*Ione.* Their beauty gives me voice.  
See how they float

On their sustaining wings of skyey  
grain,

Orange and azure deepening into  
gold :

Their soft smiles light the air like a  
star's fire.

#### CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

Hast thou beheld the form of Love ?

#### FIFTH SPIRIT.

As over wide dominions  
I sped, like some swift cloud that  
wings the wide air's wildernesses,  
That planet-crested shape swept by  
on lightning-braided pinions,  
Scattering the liquid joy of life from  
his ambrosial tresses :

His footsteps paved the world with  
light ; but as I past 'twas fading,  
And hollow Ruin yawned behind :

great sages bound in madness,  
And headless patriots, and pale youths  
who perished, unupbraiding,  
Gleamed in the night. I wandered  
o'er, till thou, O King of sadness,  
Turned by thy smile the worst I saw  
to recollected gladness.

#### SIXTH SPIRIT.

Ah, sister ! Desolation is a delicate  
thing :

It walks not on the earth, it floats not  
on the air,

But treads with silent footstep, and  
fans with silent wing

The tender hopes which in their  
hearts the best and gentlest bear ;

Who, soothed to false repose by the  
fanning plumes above,

And the music-stirring motion of its  
soft and busy feet,

Dream visions of aerial joy, and call  
the monster, Love,

And wake, and find the shadow Pain,  
as he whom now we greet.

#### CHORUS.

Though Ruin now Love's shadow be,  
Following him, destroyingly,

On Death's white and winged steed,  
Which the fleetest cannot flee,

Trampling down both flower and  
weed,

Man and beast, and foul and fair,  
Like a tempest through the air ;

Thou shalt quell this horseman grim,  
Woundless though in heart or limb.

*Prometheus.* Spirits ! how know ye  
this shall be ?

#### CHORUS.

In the atmosphere we breathe,  
As buds grow red when the snow-  
storms flee,

From spring gathering up beneath,  
Whose mild winds shake the elder-  
brake,

And the wandering herdsmen know  
That the white-thorn soon will blow :

Wisdom, Justice, Love, and Peace,  
When they struggle to increase,

Are to us as soft winds be  
To shepherd boys, the prophecy

Which begins and ends in thee.

*Ione.* Where are the Spirits fled ?  
*Panthea.* Only a sense

Remains of them, like the omnipot-  
ence

Of music, when the inspired voice and  
lute

Languish, ere yet the responses are  
mute,

Which through the deep and labyrin-  
thine soul,

Like echoes through long caverns,  
wind and roll.

*Prometheus.* How fair these air-  
born shapes ! and yet I feel

Most vain all hope but love ; and  
thou art far,

Asia! who, when my being over-  
flowed,  
\* Wert like a golden chalice to bright  
wine  
Which else had sunk into the thirsty  
dust.  
All things are still: alas! how heav-  
ily  
This quiet morning weighs upon my  
heart;  
Though I should dream I could even  
sleep with grief,  
If slumber were denied not. I would  
fain  
Be what it is my destiny to be,  
The saviour and the strength of  
suffering man,  
Or sink into the original gulf of things.  
There is no agony, and no solace left;  
Earth can console, Heaven can tor-  
ment no more.  
*Panthea.* Hast thou forgotten one  
who watches thee  
The cold dark night, and never sleeps  
but when  
The shadow of thy spirit falls on her?  
• *Prometheus.* I said all hope was  
vain but love: thou lovest.  
*Panthea.* Deeply in truth; but the  
eastern star looks white,  
And Asia waits in that far Indian vale  
The scene of her sad exile; rugged  
once  
And desolate and frozen, like this  
ravine;  
But now invested with fair flowers  
and herbs,  
And haunted by sweet airs and  
sounds, which flow  
Among the woods and waters, from  
the ether  
Of her transforming presence, which  
would fade  
If it were mingled not with thine.  
Farewell!

ACT II

SCENE I.—*Morning. A lonely Vale  
in the Indian Caucasus.*

ASIA, alone.

Asia. From all the blasts of  
heaven thou hast descended!  
Yes, like a spirit, like a thought,  
which makes

Unwonted tears throng to the horny  
eyes,  
And beatings haunt the desolated  
heart,  
Which should have learnt repose:  
thou hast descended  
Cradled in tempests; thou dost wake,  
O Spring!  
O child of many winds! As sud-  
denly  
Thou comest as the memory of a  
dream,  
Which now is sad because it hath been  
sweet;  
Like genius, or like joy, which riseth  
up  
As from the earth, clothing with  
golden clouds  
The desert of our life.  
This is the season, this the day, the  
hour;  
At sunrise thou shouldst come, sweet  
sister mine,  
Too long desired, too long delaying,  
come!  
How like death-worms the wingless  
moments crawl!  
The point of one white star is quiver-  
ing still  
Deep in the orange light of widening  
morn  
Beyond the purple mountains:  
through a chasm  
Of wind-divided mist the darker lake  
Reflects it; now it wanes: it gleams  
again  
As the waves fade, and as the burning  
threads  
Of woven cloud unravel in pale air:  
'Tis lost! and through yon peaks of  
cloud-like snow  
The roseate sunlight quivers: hear  
I not  
The Æolian music of her sea-green  
plumes  
Winnowing the crimson dawn?

[PANTHEA enters.

I feel, I see

Those eyes which burn through smiles,  
that fade in tears,  
Like stars half-quenched in mists of  
silver dew.  
Beloved and most beautiful, who  
wearest  
The shadow of that soul by which I  
live.

How late thou art ! the sphered sun  
had climbed  
The sea ; my heart was sick with  
hope, before  
The printless air felt thy belated  
plumes.

*Panthea.* Pardon, great Sister ! but  
my wings were faint

With the delight of a remembered  
dream,

As are the noontide plumes of sum-  
mer winds

Satiate with sweet flowers. I was  
wont to sleep

Peacefully, and awake refreshed and  
calm

Before the sacred Titan's fall, and thy  
Unhappy love, had made, through  
use and pity,

Both love and woe familiar to my  
heart

As they had grown to thine : erewhile  
I slept

Under the glaucous caverns of old  
Ocean

Within dim bowers of green and  
purple moss,

Our young Ione's soft and milky arms  
Locked then, as now, behind my dark,  
moist hair,

While my shut eyes and cheek were  
pressed within

The folded depth of her life-breathing  
bosom : [wind

But not as now, since I am made the  
Which fails beneath the music that I  
bear

Of thy most wordless converse ; since  
dissolved

Into the sense with which love talks,  
my rest

Was troubled and yet sweet ; my  
waking hours

Too full of care and pain.

*Asia.* Lift up thine eyes,  
And let me read thy dream.

*Panthea.* As I have said,  
With our sea-sister at his feet I slept.  
The mountain mists, condensing at  
our voice

Under the moon had spread their  
snowy flakes,

From the keen ice shielding our linked  
sleep.

Then two dreams came. One, I  
remember not.

But in the other his pale wound-worn  
limbs

Fell from Prometheus, and the azure  
night

Grew radiant with the glory of that  
form

Which lives unchanged within, and  
his voice fell

Like music which makes giddy the  
dim brain,

Faint with intoxication of keen joy :  
" Sister of her whose footsteps pave  
the world

With loveliness—more fair than  
aught but her,

Whose shadow thou art—lift thine  
eyes on me."

I lifted them : the overpowering light  
Of that immortal shape was shadowed  
o'er

By love ; which, from his soft and  
flowing limbs,

And passion-parted lips, and keen,  
faint eyes,

Steamed forth like vaporous fire ; an  
atmosphere

Which wrapped me in its all-dissoly-  
ing power,

As the warm ether of the morning sun  
Wraps ere it drinks some cloud of  
wandering dew.

I saw not, heard not, moved not, only  
felt

His presence flow and mingle through  
my blood

Till it became his life, and his grew  
mine,

And I was thus absorbed, until it  
passed,

And like the vapours when the sun  
sinks down,

Gathering again in drops upon the  
pines,

And tremulous as they, in the deep  
night

My being was condensed ; and as  
the rays

Of thought were slowly gathered, I  
could hear

His voice, whose accents lingered ere  
they died

Like footsteps of weak melody : thy  
name

Among the many sounds alone I heard  
Of what might be articulate ; though  
still

I listened through the night when  
sound was none.

Ione wakened then, and said to me :  
" Canst thou divine what troubles me  
to-night ?

I always knew what I desired before,  
Nor ever found delight to wish in  
vain.

But now I cannot tell thee what I  
seek ;

I know not ; something sweet, since  
it is sweet

Even to desire ; it is thy sport, false  
sister ;

Thou hast discovered some enchant-  
ment old,

Whose spells have stolen my spirit  
as I slept

And mingled it with thine : for when  
just now

We kissed, I felt within thy parted lips  
The sweet air that sustained me, and  
the warmth

Of the life-blood, for loss of which  
I faint,

Quivered between our intertwining  
arms."

I answered not, for the Eastern star  
grew pale,

But fled to thee.

*Asia.* Thou speakest, but thy  
words

Are as the air : I feel them not : Oh,  
Thine eyes, that I may read his  
written soul !

*Panthea.* I lift them, though they  
droop beneath the load

Of that they would express : what  
canst thou see

But thine own fairest shadow imaged  
there ?

*Asia.* Thine eyes are like the deep,  
blue, boundless heaven

Contracted to two circles underneath  
Their long, fine lashes ; dark, far,  
measureless

Orb within orb, and line through line  
inwoven,

*Panthea.* Why lookest thou as if  
a spirit passed ?

*Asia.* There is a change ; beyond  
their inmost depth

I see a shade, a shape : 'tis ~~He~~,  
arrayed

In the soft light of his own smiles,  
which spread

S.P.

Like radiance from the cloud-sur-  
rounded morn.

Prometheus, it is thine ! depart not  
yet !

Say not those smiles that we shall  
meet again

Within that bright pavilion which  
their beams

Shall build on the waste world ? The  
dream is told.

What shape is that between us ? Its  
rude hair

Roughens the wind that lifts it, its  
regard

Is wild and quick, yet, 'tis a thing of  
air,

For through its grey robe gleams the  
golden dew

Whose stars the noon has quenched  
not.

*Dream.* Follow ! Follow !  
*Panthea.* It is mine other dream.

*Asia.* It disappears.

*Panthea.* It passes now into my  
mind. Methought

As we sate here, the flower-enfolding  
buds

Burst on yon lightning-blasted al-  
mond tree,

When swift from the white Scythian  
wilderness

A wind swept forth wrinkling the  
Earth with frost :

I looked, and all the blossoms were  
blown down ;

But on each leaf was stamped, as the  
blue bells

Of Hyacinth tell Apollo's written  
O, FOLLOW, FOLLOW !

*Asia.* As you speak, your words  
Fill, pause by pause, my own for-  
gotten sleep

With shapes. Methought among the  
lawns together

We wandered, underneath the young  
grey dawn,

And multitudes of dense white  
fleecy clouds

Were wandering in thick flocks along  
the mountains

Shepherded by the slow, unwilling  
wind ;

And the white dew on the new-  
bladed grass,

Just piercing the dark earth, hung  
silently ;

N



And there was more which I remember not :

But on the shadows of the morning clouds,

Athwart the purple mountain slope, 'was written

FOLLOW, O FOLLOW ! As they vanished by,

And on each herb, from which Heaven's dew had fallen,

The like was stamped, as with a withering fire,

A wind arose among the pines ; it shook

The clinging music from their boughs, and then

Low, sweet, faint sounds, like the farewell of ghosts,

Were heard : O, FOLLOW, FOLLOW, FOLLOW ME !

And then I said, " Panthea, look on me."

But in the depth of those beloved eyes

Still I saw, FOLLOW, FOLLOW !

\* *Echo.* Follow, follow !

*Panthea.* The crags, this clear spring morning, mock our voices, As they were spirit-tongued.

*Asia.* It is some being Around the crags. What fine clear sounds ! O, list !

ECHOES (*unseen*).

Echoes we : listen !

We cannot stay :

As dew-stars glisten

Then fade away—

Child of Ocean !

*Asia.* Hark ! Spirits, speak. The liquid responses

Of their aerial tongues yet sound.

*Panthea.* I hear.

ECHOES.

O, follow, follow !

As our voice recedeth

Through the caverns hollow,

Where the forest spreadeth ;

(*More distant.*)

O, follow, follow,

Through the caverns hollow,

As the song floats thou pursue,

Where the wild bee never flew,

Through the noon-tide darkness deep,  
By the odour-breathing sleep

Of faint night-flowers, and the waves

At the fountain-lighted caves,

While our music, wild and sweet,

Mocks thy gently falling feet,

Child of Ocean !

*Asia.* Shall we pursue the sound ?

It grows more faint

And distant.

*Panthea.* List ! the strain floats

nearer now.

ECHOES.

In the world unknown

Sleeps a voice unspoken ;

By thy step alone

Can its rest be broken ;

Child of Ocean !

*Asia.* How the notes sink upon the

ebbing wind !

ECHOES.

O, follow, follow !

Through the caverns hollow,

As the song floats thou pursue,

By the woodland noon-tide dew ;

By the forests, lakes, and fountains,

Through the many-folded mountains ;

To the rents, and gulfs, and chasms,

Where the Earth reposed from

spasms,

On the day when He and thou

Parted, to commingle now ;

Child of Ocean !

*Asia.* Come, sweet Panthea, link

thy hand in mine,

And follow, ere the voices fade

away.

SCENE II.—A Forest, intermingled with Rocks and Caverns. ASIA and PANTHEA pass into it. Two young Fauns are sitting on a Rock, listening.

SEMICHORUS I. OF SPIRITS.

The path through which that lovely twain

Have past, by cedar, pine, and yew,

And each dark tree that ever grew,

Is curtained out from Heaven's wide blue ;

Nor sun, nor moon, nor wind, nor rain,

Can pierce its interwoven  
bowers,  
Nor aught, save where some cloud  
of dew,  
Drifted along the earth-creeping  
breeze,  
Between the trunks of the hoar trees,  
Hangs each a pearl in the pale  
flowers  
Of the green laurel, blown anew;  
And bends, and then fades silently,  
One frail and fair anemone:  
Or when some star of many a one  
That climbs and wanders through  
steep night,  
Has found the cleft through which  
alone  
Beams fall from high those depths  
upon  
Ere it is borne away; away,  
By the swift Heavens that cannot  
stay,  
It scatters drops of golden light,  
Like lines of rain that ne'er unite:  
And the gloom divine is all around;  
And underneath is the mossy ground.

## SEMICHORUS II.

There the voluptuous nightingales,  
Are awake through all the broad  
noon-day,  
When one with bliss or sadness fails,  
And through the windless ivy  
boughs,  
Sick with sweet love, droops dying  
away  
On its mate's music-panting bosom;  
Another from the swinging blossom,  
Watching to catch the languid  
close  
Of the last strain, then lifts on  
high  
The wings of the weak melody,  
Till some new strain of feeling bear  
The song, and all the woods are  
mute;  
When there is heard through the dim  
air  
The rush of wings, and rising there  
Like many a lake-surrounded flute,  
Sounds overflow the listener's brain  
So sweet, that joy is almost pain.

## SEMICHORUS I.

There those enchanted eddies play  
Of echoes, music-tongued, which  
draw,

By Demogorgon's mighty law,  
With melting rapture, or sweet awe,  
All spirits on that secret way;  
As inland boats are driven to  
Ocean  
Down streams made strong with  
mountain-thaw  
And first there comes a gentle  
sound  
To those in talk or slumber  
bound,  
And wakes the destined, soft  
emotion  
Attracts, impels them; those who  
saw  
Say from the breathing earth be-  
hind  
There streams a plume-uplifting  
wind  
Which drives them on their path,  
while they  
Believe their own swift wings and  
feet

The sweet desires within obey:  
And so they float upon their way,  
Until, still sweet, but loud and  
strong,  
The storm of sound is driven along,  
Sucked up and hurrying: as they  
flee  
Behind, its gathering billows meet  
And to the fatal mountain bear  
Like clouds amid the yielding air.

*First Faun.* Canst thou imagine  
where those spirits live  
Which make such delicate music in  
the woods? [caves  
We haunt within the least frequented  
And closest coverts, and we know  
these wilds,  
Yet never meet them, though we hear  
them oft:

Where may they hide themselves?  
*Second Faun.* 'Tis hard to tell:  
I have heard those more skilled in  
spirits say,  
The bubbles, which enchantment of  
the sun  
Sucks from the pale faint water-  
flowers that pave  
The oozy bottom of clear lakes and  
pools,  
Are the pavilions where such dwell  
and float  
Under the green and golden atmo-  
sphere

Which noon-tide kindles through the  
woven leaves;  
And when these burst, and the thin  
fiery air,  
The which they breathed within those  
luculent domes,  
Ascends to flow like meteors through  
the night,  
They ride on them, and rein their  
headlong speed,  
And bow their burning crests, and  
glide in fire  
Under the waters of the earth again.  
*First Faun.* If such live thus, have  
others other lives,  
Under pink blossoms or within the  
bells  
Of meadow flowers, or folded violets  
deep,  
Or on their dying odours, when they  
die,  
Or on the sunlight of the sphered dew?  
*Second Faun.* Ay, many more  
which we may well divine.  
But should we stay to speak, noon-  
tide would come,  
And thwart Silenus find his goats un-  
drawn,  
And grudge to sing those wise and  
lovely songs  
Of Fate, and Chance, and God, and  
Chaos old,  
And Love, and the chained Titan's  
woeful doom.  
And how he shall be loosed, and make  
the earth  
One brotherhood: delightful strains  
which cheer  
Our solitary twilights, and which  
charm  
To silence the unenvying nightingales.

SCENE III.—*A Pinnacle of Rock  
among Mountains. ASIA and  
PANTHEA.*

*Panthea.* Hither the sound has  
borne us—to the realm  
Of Demogorgon, and the mighty por-  
tal,  
Like a volcano's meteor-breathing  
chasm,  
Whence the oracular vapour is hurled  
up  
Which lonely men drink wandering in  
their youth,

And call truth, virtue, love, genius,  
or joy,  
That maddening wine of life, whose  
dregs they drain  
To deep intoxication; and uplift,  
Like Mænads who cry loud, Evøe!  
Evøe!  
The voice which is contagion to the  
world.  
*Asia.* Fit throne for such a Power!  
Magnificent!  
How glorious art thou, Earth! and if  
thou be  
The shadow of some spirit lovelier  
still,  
Though evil stain its work, and it  
should be  
Like its creation, weak yet beautiful,  
I could fall down and worship that  
and thee.  
Even now my heart adareth: Won-  
derful!  
Look, sister, ere the vapour dim thy  
brain:  
Beneath is a wide plain of billowy  
mist,  
As a lake, paving in the morning sky,  
With azure waves which burst in sil-  
ver light,  
Some Indian vale. Behold it, rolling  
on  
Under the curdling winds, and island-  
ing  
The peak whereon we stand, midway,  
around,  
Encinctured by the dark and bloom-  
ing forests,  
Dim twilight-lawns, and stream-illu-  
mined caves,  
And wind-enchanted shapes of wan-  
dering mist;  
And far on high the keen sky-cleaving  
mountains,  
From icy spires of sunlike radiance  
fling  
The dawn, as lifted Ocean's dazzling  
spray,  
From some Atlantic islet scattered up,  
Spangles the wind with lamp-like  
water-drops.  
The vale is girdled with their walls, a  
howl  
Of Cataracts from their thaw-cloven  
ravines  
Satiates the listening wind, continu-  
ous, vast,

Awful as silence. Hark ! the rushing  
snow !  
The sun-awakened avalanche ! whose  
mass,  
Thrice sifted by the storm, had gathered there  
Flake after flake, in heaven-defying  
minds  
As thought by thought is piled, till  
some great truth  
Is loosened, and the nations echo  
round,  
Shaken to their roots, as do the mountains now.

*Panthea.* Look how the gusty sea  
of mist is breaking  
In crimson foam, even at our feet !  
it rises  
As Ocean at the enchantment of the  
moon  
Round foodless men wrecked on some  
oozy isle.

*Asia.* The fragments of the cloud  
are scattered up ;  
The wind that lifts them disentwines  
my hair ;  
Its billows now sweep o'er mine eyes ;  
my brain  
Grows dizzy ; I see shapes within the  
mist.

*Panthea.* A countenance with beck-  
oning smiles : there burns  
An azure fire within its golden locks !  
Another and another : hark ! they  
speak !

SONG OF SPIRITS.

To the deep, to the deep,  
Down, down !  
Through the shade of sleep,  
Through the cloudy strife  
Of Death and of Life ;  
Through the veil and the bar  
Of things which seem and are,  
Even to the steps of the remotest  
throne,  
Down, down !

While the sound whirls around,  
Down, down !  
As the fawn draws the hound,  
As the lightning the vapour,  
As a weak moth the taper ;  
Death, despair ; love, sorrow ;  
Time both ; to-day, to-morrow ;  
As steel obeys the spirit of the stone,  
Down, down !

Through the grey, void abysm,  
Down, down !  
Where the air is no prism,  
And the moon and stars are not,  
And the cavern-crag wears not  
The radiance of Heaven,  
Nor the gloom to Earth given,  
Where there is one pervading, one  
alone,  
Down, down !

In the depth of the deep  
Down, down !  
Like veiled lightning asleep,  
Like the spark nursed in embers,  
The last look Love remembers,  
Like a diamond, which shines  
On the dark wealth of mines,  
A spell is treasured but for thee  
alone.  
Down, down !

We have bound thee, we guide thee ;  
Down, down !  
With the bright form beside thee ;  
Resist not the weakness,  
Such strength is in meekness  
That the Eternal, the Immortal,  
Must unloose through life's portal  
The snake-like Doom coiled under-  
neath his throne  
By that alone.

SCENE IV.—*The Cave of DEMOGOR-  
GON. ASIA and PANTHEA.*

*Panthea.* What veiled form sits on  
that ebon throne ?

*Asia.* The veil has fallen.

*Panthea.* I see a mighty dark-  
ness

Filling the seat of power, and rays of  
gloom

Dart round, as light from the merid-  
ian sun,

Ungazed upon and shapeless ; neith-  
er limb,

Nor form, nor outline ; yet we feel it  
is

A living spirit.

*Demogorgon.* Ask what thou  
wouldst know.

*Asia.* What canst thou tell ?

*Demogorgon.* All things thou  
dar'st demand.

*Asia.* Who made the living world ?

<i>Demogorgon.</i>	GOD.	And semi-vital worms ; but he re-
<i>Asia.</i>	Who made all	fused
That it contains ?	thought, passion,	The birthright of their being, know-
reason, will,		ledge, power,
Imagination ?		The skill which wields the elements,
<i>Demogorgon.</i>	God : Almighty God.	the thought
<i>Asia.</i>	Who made that sense which,	Which pierces this dim universe like
when the winds of spring		light,
In rarest visitation, or the voice		Self-empire, and the majesty of love ;
Of one beloved heard in youth alone,		For thirst of which they fainted. Then
Fills the faint eyes with falling tears		Prometheus
which dim		Gave wisdom, which is strength, to
The radiant looks of unbewailing		Jupiter,
flowers,		And with this law alone, " Let man
And leaves this peopled earth a soli-		be free,"
tude		Clothed him with the dominion of
When it returns no more ?		wide Heaven.
<i>Demogorgon.</i>	Merciful God.	To know nor faith, nor love, nor law ;
<i>Asia.</i>	And who made terror, mad-	to be
ness, crime, remorse,		Omnipotent but friendless is to reign ;
Which from the links of the great		And Jove now reigned ; for on the
chain of things,		race of man
To every thought within the mind of		First famine, and then toil, and then
man		disease,
Sway and drag heavily, and each one		Strife, wounds, and ghastly death un-
reels		seen before,
Under the load towards the pit of		Fell ; and the unseasonable seasons
death ;		drove,
Abandoned hope, and love that turns		With alternating shafts of frost and
to hate ;		fire,
And self-contempt, bitterer to drink		Their shelterless, pale tribes to moun-
than blood ;	[speech	tain caves :
Pain, whose unhceded and familiar		And in their desert hearts fierce wants
Is howling, and keen shrieks, day		he sent,
after day ;		And mad disquietudes, and shadows
And Hell, or the sharp fear of Hell ?		idle
<i>Demogorgon.</i>	He reigns.	Of unreal good, which levied mutual
<i>Asia.</i>	Utter his name : a world	war,
pinning in pain		So ruining the lair wherein they raged.
Asks but his name : curses shall drag		Prometheus saw, and waked the le-
him down.		gioned hopes
<i>Demogorgon.</i>	He reigns.	Which sleep within folded Elysian
<i>Asia.</i>	I feel, I know it : who ?	flowers,
<i>Demogorgon.</i>	He reigns.	Nepenthe, Moly, Amaranth, fadeless
<i>Asia.</i>	Who reigns ? There was the	blooms,
Heaven and Earth at first,		That they might hide with thin and
And Light and Love ; then Saturn,		rainbow wings
from whose throne		The shape of Death ; and Love he
Time fell, an envious shadow : such		sent to bind
the state		The disunited tendrils of that vine
Of the earth's primal spirits beneath		Which bears the wine of life, the hu-
his sway,		man heart ;
As the calm joy of flowers and living		And he tamed fire which, like some
leaves		beast of prey,
Before the wind or sun has withered		Most terrible, but lovely, played be-
them		neath

The frown of man ; and tortured to  
his will  
Iron and gold, the slaves and signs of  
power,  
And gems and poisons and all subtlest  
forms  
Hidden beneath the mountains and  
the waves.  
He gave man speech, and speech cre-  
ated thought,  
Which is the measure of the universe ;  
And Science struck the thrones of  
earth and heaven,  
Which shook, but fell not ; and the  
harmonious mind  
Poured itself forth in all-prophetic  
song ;  
And music lifted up the listening  
spirit  
Until it walked, exempt from mortal  
care,  
Godlike, o'er the clear billows of sweet  
sound ;  
And human hands first mimicked and  
then mocked,  
With moulded limbs more lovely  
than its own. [vine,  
The human form, till marble grew di-  
And mothers, gazing, drank the love  
men see  
Reflected in their race, behold, and  
perish.  
He told the hidden power of herbs and  
springs,  
And Disease drank and slept. Death  
grew like sleep.  
He taught the implicated orbits woven  
Of the wide-wandering stars ; and  
how the sun  
Changes his lair, and by what secret  
spell  
The pale moon is transformed, when  
her broad eye  
Gazes not on the interlunar sea :  
He taught to rule, as life directs the  
limbs,  
The tempest-winged chariots of the  
Ocean,  
And the Celt knew the Indian. Cities  
then  
Were built, and through their snow-  
like columns flowed  
The warm winds, and the azure  
ether shone,  
And the blue sea and shadowy hills  
were seen.

Such, the alleviations of his state,  
Prometheus gave to man, for which he  
hangs  
Withering in destined pain : but who  
rains down  
Evil, the immedicable plague, which,  
while  
Man looks on his creation like a God  
And sees that it is glorious, drives him  
on  
The wreck of his own will, the scorn  
of earth,  
The outcast, the abandoned, the  
alone ?  
Not Jove : while yet his frown shook  
heaven, ay, when  
His adversary from adamantine  
chains  
Cursed him, he trembled like a slave.  
Declare  
Who is his master ? Is he too a  
slave ?  
*Demogorgon.* All spirits are en-  
slaved which serve things evil.  
Thou knowest if Jupiter be such or no.  
*Asia.* Whom calledst thou God ?  
*Demogorgon.* I spoke but as ye  
speak,  
For Jove is the supreme of living  
things.  
*Asia.* Who is the master of the  
slave ?  
*Demogorgon.* If the abysm  
Could vomit forth its secrets. But a  
voice  
Is wanting, the deep truth is image-  
less ;  
For what would it avail to bid thee  
gaze  
On the revolving world ? What to  
bid speak  
Fate, Time, Occasion, Chance and  
Change ? To these  
All things are subject but eternal  
Love.  
*Asia.* So much I asked before, and  
my heart gave  
The response thou hast given ; and of  
such truths  
Each to itself must be the oracle.  
One more demand ; and do thou  
answer me  
As my own soul would answer, did it  
know  
That which I ask. Prometheus shall  
arise

Henceforth the sun of this rejoicing world :

When shall the destined hour arrive !  
*Demogorgon.* Behold !

*Asia.* The rocks are cloven, and  
through the purple night

I see cars drawn by rainbow-winged  
steeds

Which trample the dim winds : in  
each there stands

A wild-eyed chariotteer urging their  
flight.

Some look behind, as fiends pursued  
them there,

And yet I see no shapes but the keen  
stars

Others, with burning eyes, lean forth,  
and drink

With eager lips the wind of their own  
speed,

As if the thing they loved fled on be-  
fore,

And now, even now, they clasped it.  
Their bright locks

Stream like a comet's flashing hair :  
they all

Sweep onward.

*Demogorgon.* These are the immor-  
tal Hours,

Of whom thou didst demand. One  
waits for thee.

*Asia.* A spirit with a dreadful  
countenance

Checks its dark chariot by the craggy  
gulf.

Unlike thy brethren, ghastly chari-  
oteer,

Who art thou ? Whither wouldst  
thou bear me ? Speak !

*Spirit.* I am the shadow of a des-  
tiny

More dread than is my aspect : ere  
yon planet

Has set, the darkness which ascends  
with me

Shall wrap in lasting night heaven's  
kingless throne.

*Asia.* What meanest thou ?

*Panthea.* That terrible shadow  
floats

Up from its throne, as may the lurid  
smoke

Of earthquake-ruined cities o'er the  
sea.

Lo ! it ascends the car ; the coursers  
fly

Terrified : watch its path among the  
stars

Blackening the night !

*Asia.* Thus I am answered :  
strange !

*Panthea.* See, near the verge, an-  
other chariot stays ;

An ivory shell inlaid with crimson  
fire,

Which comes and goes within its  
sculptured rim

Of delicate strange tracery ; the  
young spirit

That guides it has the dove-like eyes  
of hope ;

How its soft smiles attract the soul !  
as light

Lures winged insects through the  
lampless air.

#### SPIRIT.

My coursers are fed with the lightning.  
They drink of the whirlwind's  
stream.

And when the red morning is bright-  
ning

They bathe in the fresh sunbeam ;  
They have strength for their swift-  
ness, I deem,

Then ascend with me, daughter of  
Ocean.

I desire : and their speed makes night  
kindle ;

I fear. they outstrip the Typhoon ;  
Ere the cloud piled on Atlas can  
dwindle

We encircle the earth and the  
moon :

We shall rest from long labours at  
noon :

Then ascend with me, daughter of  
Ocean.

SCENE V.—*The Car pauses within a  
Cloud on the Top of a snowy  
Mountain. ASIA, PANTHEA, and  
the SPIRIT OF THE HOUR*

#### SPIRIT.

On the brink of the night and the  
morning

My coursers are wont to respire ;  
But the Earth has just whispered a  
warning

That their flight must be swifter  
than fire :

They shall drink the hot speed of  
desire !

*Asia.* Thou breathest on their nos-  
trils, but my breath  
Would give them swifter speed.

*Spirit.* Alas ! it could not.

*Panthea.* Oh Spirit ! pause, and  
tell whence is the light  
Which fills the cloud ? the sun is yet  
unrisen.

*Spirit.* The sun will rise not until  
noon. Apollo  
Is held in heaven by wonder ; and  
the light

Which fills this vapour, as the ærial  
hue  
Of fountain-gazing roses fills the  
water.

Flows from thy mighty sister.

*Panthea.* Yes, I feel—

*Asia.* What is it with thee, sister ?  
Thou art pale.

*Panthea.* How thou art changed !  
I dare not look on thee ;  
I feel but see thee not. I scarce en-  
dure

The radiance of thy beauty. Some  
good change  
Is working in the elements, which  
suffer

Thy presence thus unveiled. The  
Nereids tell

That on the day when the clear  
hyaline

Was cloven at thy uprise, and thou  
didst stand

Within a veined shell, which floated  
on

Over the calm floor of the crystal sea,  
Among the Egean isles, and by the  
shores

Which bear thy name ; love, like the  
atmosphere

Of the sun's fire filling the living  
world,

Burst from thee, and illumined earth  
and heaven

And the deep ocean and the sunless  
caves

And all that dwells within them ; till  
grief cast

Eclipse upon the soul from which it  
came :

Such art thou now ; nor is it I alone,  
Thy sister, thy companion, thine own  
chosen one,

But the whole world which seeks thy  
sympathy.

Hearst thou not sounds i' the air  
which speak the love  
Of all articulate beings ? Feelest  
thou not

The inanimate winds enamoured of  
thee ? List ! *[Music.]*

*Asia.* Thy words are sweeter than  
aught else but his

Whose echoes they are : yet all love  
is sweet,

Given or returned. Common as light  
is love, *[ever.]*

And its familiar voice wearies not  
Like the wide heaven, the all-sustain-  
ing air,

It makes the reptile equal to the God :  
They who inspire it most are fortu-  
nate,

As I am now ; but those who feel it  
most

Are happier still, after long sufferings,  
As I shall soon become.

*Panthea.* List ! Spirits, speak.

VOICE *(in the air, singing).*

Life of Life ! thy lips enkindle  
With their love the breath between  
them ;

And thy smiles before they dwindle  
Make the cold air fire ; then screen  
them

In those looks, where whoso gazes  
Faints, entangled in their mazes.

Child of Light ! thy limbs are burning  
Through the vest which seems to  
hide them ;

As the radiant lines of morning  
Through the clouds, ere they divide  
them ;

And this atmosphere divinest  
Shrouds thee wheresoe'er thou shin-  
est.

Fair are others ; none beholds thee,  
But thy voice sounds low and ten-  
der

Like the fairest, for it folds thee  
From the sight, that liquid splend-  
our,

And all feel, yet see thee never,  
As I feel now, lost for ever !

Lamp of Earth ! where'er thou mov-  
est



Its dim shapes are clad with brightness,  
 And the souls of whom thou lovest  
 Walk upon the winds with lightness,  
 Till they fail, as I am failing,  
 Dizzy, lost, yet unbewailing !

## ASIA.

My soul is an enchanted boat,  
 Which, like a sleeping swan, doth float  
 Upon the silver waves of thy sweet singing ;  
 And thine doth like an angel sit  
 Beside the helm conducting it,  
 Whilst all the winds with melody are ringing.  
 It seems to float ever, for ever,  
 Upon that many-winding river,  
 Between mountains, woods, abysses,  
 A paradise of wildernesses !  
 Till, like one in slumber bound,  
 Borne to the ocean, I float down,  
 around,  
 Into a sea profound, of ever-spreading sound.

Meanwhile thy spirit lifts its pinions  
 In music's most serene dominions ;  
 Catching the winds that fan that happy heaven.

And we sail on, away, afar,  
 Without a course, without a star,  
 But, by the instinct of sweet music driven ;

Till through Elysian garden islets  
 By thee, most beautiful of pilots,  
 Where never mortal pinnacle glided,  
 The boat of my desire is guided :

Realms where the air we breathe is love,  
 Which in the winds on the waves doth move,

Harmonising this earth with what we feel above

We have passed Age's icy caves,  
 And Manhood's dark and tossing waves,

And Youth's smooth ocean, smiling to betray :

Beyond the glassy gulfs we flee  
 Of shadow-peopled Infancy,  
 Through Death and Birth, to a diviner day :

A paradise of vaulted bowers  
 Lit by downward-gazing flowers,  
 And watery paths that wind between

Wildernesses calm and green,  
 Peopled by shapes too bright to see,  
 And rest, having beheld ; somewhat like thee ;  
 Which walk upon the sea, and chant melodiously !

## ACT III

SCENE I.—*Heaven.* JUPITER on his Throne ; THETIS and the other Deities assembled.

*Jupiter.* Ye congregated powers of heaven, who share  
 The glory and the strength of him ye serve,

Rejoice ! henceforth I am omnipotent.  
 All else had been subdued to me ; alone

The soul of man like unextinguished fire,

Yet burns towards heaven with fierce reproach, and doubt,

And lamentation, and reluctant prayer,

Hurling up insurrection, which might make

Our antique empire insecure, though built

On eldest faith and hell's coeval, fear ;  
 And though my curses through the pendulous air,

Like snow on herbless peaks, fall flake by flake,

And cling to it ; though under my wrath's night

It climb the crags of life, step after step,

Which wound it, as ice wounds unsandalled feet,

It yet remains supreme o'er misery,  
 Aspiring, unexpressed, yet soon to fall :  
 Even now have I begotten a strange wonder,

That fatal child, the terror of the earth,

Who waits but till the destined hour arrive,

Bearing from Demogorgon's vacant throne

The dreadful night of ever-living  
limbs  
Which clothed that awful spirit un-  
beheld,  
To redescend, and trample out the  
spark.  
Pour forth heaven's wine, Idæan  
Ganymede,  
And let it fill the Dædal cups like fire,  
And from the flower-inwoven soil  
divine,  
Ye all-triumphant harmonies arise,  
As dew from earth under the twilight  
stars :  
Drink ! be the nectar circling through  
your veins  
The soul of joy, ye ever-living Gods,  
Till exultation burst in one wide  
voice  
Like music from Elysian winds.  
And thou  
Ascend beside me, veiled in the light  
Of the desire which makes thee one  
with me,  
Thetis, bright image of eternity !  
When thou didst cry, " Insufferable  
might !  
God ! Spare me ! I sustain not the  
quick flames,  
The penetrating presence ; all my  
being,  
Like him whom the Numidian seps  
did thaw  
Into a dew with poison, is dissolved,  
Sinking through its foundations : "  
even then  
Two mighty spirits, mingling made a  
third  
Mightier than either, which, unbodied  
now,  
Between us floats, felt, although un-  
beheld ;  
Waiting the incarnation, which as-  
cends,  
(Hear ye the thunder of the fiery  
wheels  
Gridding the winds ?) from Demogor-  
gon's throne.  
Victory ! victory ! Feelest thou not,  
O world !  
The earthquake of his chariot thun-  
dering up  
Olympus ?

[The Car of the HOUR arrives. DE-  
MOGORGON descends and moves  
towards the Throne of JUPITER.

Awful shape, what art thou ?  
Speak !  
Demogorgon. Eternity. Demand  
no direr name.  
Descend, and follow me down the  
abyss.  
I am thy child, as thou wert Saturn's  
child ;  
Mightier than thee : and we must  
dwell together  
Henceforth in darkness. Lift thy  
lightnings not.  
The tyranny of heaven none may re-  
tain,  
Or reassume, or hold, succeeding  
thee :  
Yet if thou wilt, as 'tis the destiny  
Of trodden worms to writhe till they  
are dead,  
Put forth thy might.  
Jupiter. Detested prodigy !  
Even thus beneath the deep Titanian  
prisons  
I trample thee ! Thou lingerest ?  
Mercy ! mercy !  
No pity, no release, no respite ! Oh,  
That thou wouldst make mine enemy  
my judge,  
Even where he hangs, seared by my  
long revenge,  
On Caucasus ! he would not doom me  
thus.  
Gentle, and just, and dreadless, is he  
not  
The monarch of the world ? What  
then art thou ?  
No refuge ! no appeal !  
Sink with me then,  
We two will sink on the wide waves of  
ruin,  
Even as a vulture and a snake out-  
spont  
Drop, twisted in inextricable fight,  
Into a shoreless sea. Let hell un-  
lock  
Its mounded oceans of tempestuous  
fire,  
And whelm on them into the bottom-  
less void  
This desolated world, and thee, and  
me,  
The conqueror and the conquered,  
and the wreck  
Of that for which they combated.  
Ai ! Ai !  
The elements obey me not. I sink

Dizzily down, ever, for ever, down.  
 And, like a cloud, mine enemy above  
 Darkens my fall with victory ! Ai !  
 Ai !

SCENE II.—*The Mouth of a great  
 River in the Island Atlantis.  
 OCEAN is discovered reclining  
 near the Shore ; APOLLO stands  
 beside him.*

*Ocean.* He'fell, thou sayest, beneath  
 his conqueror's frown ?

*Apollo.* Ay, when the strife was  
 ended which made dim

The orb I rule, and shook the solid  
 stars,

The terrors of his eye illumined  
 heaven

With sanguine light, through the  
 thick ragged skirts

Of the victorious darkness, as he fell :  
 Like the last glare of day's red agony,

Which, from a rent among the fiery  
 clouds,

Burns far along the tempest-wrinkled  
 deep.

*Ocean.* He sunk to the abyss ? To  
 the dark void ?

*Apollo.* An eagle so caught in  
 some bursting cloud

On Caucasus, his thunder-baffled  
 wings

Entangled in the whirlwind, and his  
 eyes

Which gazed on the undazzling sun,  
 now blinded

By the white lightning, while the  
 ponderous hail

Beats on his struggling form, which  
 sinks at length

Prone, and the aerial ice clings over it.  
*Ocean.* Henceforth the fields of

Heaven-reflecting sea

Which are my realm, will heave, un-  
 stained with blood,

Beneath the uplifting winds, like  
 plains of corn

Swayed by the summer air ; my  
 streams will flow

Round many peopled continents, and  
 round

Fortunate isles ; and from their glassy  
 thrones

Blue Proteus and his humid nymphs  
 shall mark

The shadow of fair ships, as mortals  
 see

The floating bark of the light laden  
 moon

With that white star, its sightless  
 pilot's crest,

Borne down the rapid sunset's ebbing  
 sea ;

Tracking their path no more by  
 blood and groans,

And desolation, and the mingled  
 voice

Of slavery and command ; but by the  
 light

Of wave-reflected flowers, and floating  
 odours,

And music soft, and mild, free, gentle  
 voices,

That sweetest music, such as spirits  
 love.

*Apollo.* And I shall gaze not on the  
 deeds which make

My mind obscure with sorrow, as  
 eclipse

Darkens the sphere I guide ; but list,  
 I hear

The small, clear, silver lute of the  
 young Spirit

That sits i' the morning star.  
*Ocean.* Thou must away ;

Thy steeds will pause at even, till  
 when farewell :

The loud deep calls me home even  
 now to feed it

With azure calm out of the emerald  
 urns

Which stand for ever full beside my  
 throne.

Behold the Nereids under the green  
 sea,

Their wavering limbs borne on the  
 wind-like stream,

Their white arms lifted o'er their  
 streaming hair

With garlands pied and starry sea-  
 flower crowns,

Hastening to grace their mighty  
 sister's joy.

[*A sound of waves is heard.*  
 It is the unpastured sea hungering  
 for calm.

Peace, monster ; I come now. Fare-  
 well.

*Apollo.* Farewell.

SCENE III.—*Caucasus.* PROMETHEUS, HERCULES, IONE, *the EARTH, SPIRITS, ASIA, and PANTHEA, borne in the Car with the SPIRIT OF THE HOUR.*

HERCULES *unbinds* PROMETHEUS, *who descends.*

*Hercules.* Most glorious among spirits! thus doth strength To wisdom, courage, and long-suffering love, And thee, who art the form they animate, Minister like a slave.

*Prometheus.* Thy gentle words Are sweeter even than freedom long desired And long delayed.

Asia, thou light of life, Shadow of beauty unbeheld; and ye, Fair sister nymphs who made long years of pain Sweet to remember, through your love and care; Henceforth we will not part. There is a cave All overgrown with trailing odorous plants, Which curtain out the day with leaves and flowers, And paved with veined emerald, and a fountain, Leaps in the midst with an awakening sound. From its curved roof the mountain's frozen tears, Like snow, or silver, or long diamond spires, Hang downward, raining forth a doubtful light; And there is heard the ever-moving air, Whispering without from tree to tree, and birds, And bees; and all around are mossy seats, And the rough walls are clothed with long soft grass; A simple dwelling, which shall be our own; Where we will sit and talk of time and change, As the world ebbs and flows, ourselves unchanged.

What can hide man from mutability? And if ye sigh, then I will smile; and thou,

Ione, shalt chant fragments of sea-music,

Until I weep, when ye shall smile away

The tears she brought, which yet were sweet to shed.

We will entangle buds and flowers and beams

Which twinkle on the fountain's brim, and make

Strange combinations out of common things,

Like human babes in their brief innocence;

And we will search with looks and words of love,

For hidden thoughts, each lovelier than the last,

Our unexhausted spirits; and like lutes [wind,

Touched by the skill of the enamoured Weave harmonies divine, yet ever new,

From difference sweet where discord cannot be;

And hither come, sped on the charmed winds,

Which meet from all the points of heaven, as bees

From every flower aerial Enna feeds, At their own island-homes in Himera,

The echoes of the human world which tell

Of the low voice of love, almost unheard,

And dove-eyed pity's murmured pain, and music,

Itself the echo of the heart, and all That tempers or improves man's life.

now free;

And lovely apparitions, dim at first, Then radiant as the mind, arising bright

From the embrace of beauty, whence the forms

Of which these are the phantoms, casts on them

The gathered rays which are reality, Shall visit us, the progeny immortal

Of Painting, Sculpture, and rapt Poesy,

And arts, though unimagined, yet to be.

The wandering voices and the shadows  
 these  
 Of all that man becomes, the medi-  
 ators  
 Of that best worship, love, by him  
 and us  
 Given and returned; swift shapes and  
 sounds, which grow  
 More fair and soft as man grows wise  
 and kind,  
 And veil by veil, evil and error fall:  
 Such virtue has the cave and place  
 around.

[Turning to the SPIRIT OF THE  
 HOUR.

For thee, fair Spirit, one toil remains.  
 Ione,  
 Give her that curved shell, which  
 Proteus old,  
 Made Asia's nuptial boon, breathing  
 within it  
 A voice to be accomplished, and  
 which thou  
 Didst hide in grass under the hollow  
 rock.

Ione. Thou most desired Hour,  
 more loved and lovely  
 Than all thy sisters, this the mystic  
 shell;  
 See the pale azure fading into silver  
 Lining it with a soft yet glowing  
 light:

Looks it not like lulled music sleep-  
 ing there?

Spirit. It seems in truth the fairest  
 shell of Ocean;

Its sound must be at once both sweet  
 and strange.

Prometheus. Go, borne over the  
 cities of mankind  
 On whirlwind-footed coursers: once  
 again

Outspeed the sun around the orb'd  
 world

And as thy chariot cleaves the kind-  
 ling air,

Thou breathe into the many-folded  
 shell,

Loosening its mighty music; it shall  
 be

As thunder mingled with clear echoes:  
 then

Return: and thou shalt dwell beside  
 our cave.

And thou, O Mother Earth!—

*The Earth.*

I hear, I feel;

Thy lips are on me, and thy touch  
 runs down

Even to the adamant central gloom  
 Along these marble nerves; 'tis life,  
 'tis joy,

And, through my withered, old, and  
 icy frame

The warmth of an immortal youth  
 shoots down

Circling. Henceforth the many chil-  
 dren fair

Folded in my sustaining arms; all  
 plants,

And creeping forms, and insects rain-  
 bow-winged,

And birds, and beasts, and fish, and  
 human shapes,

Which drew disease and pain from my  
 wan bosom,

Draining the poison of despair, shall  
 take

And interchange sweet nutriment;  
 to me

Shall they become like sister-ante-  
 lopes

By one fair dam, snow-white and swift  
 as wind,

Nursed among lilies near a brimming  
 stream.

The dew-mists of my sunless sleep  
 shall float

Under the stars like balm: night-  
 folded flowers

Shall suck unwithering hues in their  
 repose:

And men and beasts in happy dreams  
 shall gather

Strength for the coming day, and all  
 its joy:

And death shall be the last embrace of  
 her

Who takes the life she gave, even as a  
 mother,

Folding her child, says, "Leave me  
 not again."

Asia. Oh, mother! wherefore speak  
 the name of death?

Cease they to love, and move, and  
 breathe, and speak,

Who die?

*The Earth.* It would avail not to  
 reply:

Thou art immortal, and this tongue  
 is known

But to the uncommunicating dead.

Death is the veil which those who live  
call life :  
They sleep, and it is lifted : and  
meanwhile  
In mild variety the seasons mild  
With rainbow-skirted showers, and  
odorous winds,  
And long blue meteors cleansing the  
dull night,  
And the life-kindling shafts of the  
keen sun's  
All-piercing bow, and the dew-min-  
gled rain  
Of the calm moonbeams, a soft in-  
fluence mild,  
Shall clothe the forests and the fields,  
ay, even  
The crag-built deserts of the barren  
deep,  
With ever-living leaves, and fruits,  
and flowers.  
And thou ! There is a cavern where  
my spirit  
Was panted forth in anguish whilst  
thy pain  
Made my heart mad, and those that  
did inhale it  
Became mad too, and built a temple  
there,  
And spoke, and were oracular, and  
lured  
The erring nations round to mutual  
war,  
And faithless faith, such as Jove kept  
with thee ;  
Which breath now rises, as amongst  
tall weeds  
A violet's exhalation, and it fills  
With a serener light and crimson air  
Intense, yet soft, the rocks and woods  
around ;  
It feeds the quick growth of the ser-  
pent vine,  
And the dark linked ivy tangling wild,  
And budding, blown, or odour-faded  
blooms  
Which star the winds with points of  
coloured light,  
As they rain through them, and bright  
golden globes  
Of fruit, suspended in their own green  
heaven,  
And through their veined leaves and  
amber stems  
The flowers whose purple and trans-  
lucid bowls

Stand ever mantling with ærial dew,  
The drink of spirits ; and it circles  
round,  
Like the soft waving wings of noonday  
dreams,  
Inspiring calm and happy thoughts  
like mine,  
Now thou art thus restored. This  
cave is thine,  
Arise ! Appear !  
*[A SPIRIT rises in the likeness of a  
winged child.]*  
This is my torch-bearer ;  
Who let his lamp out in old time with  
gazing  
On eyes from which he kindled it  
anew,  
With love, which is as fire, sweet  
daughter mine,  
For such is that within thine own.  
Run, wayward,  
And guide this company beyond the  
peak  
Of Bacchic Nysa, Mænad-haunted  
mountain,  
And beyond Indus and its tribute  
rivers,  
Trampling the torrent streams and  
glassy lakes  
With feet unwet, unwearied, undelay-  
ing,  
And up the green ravine, across the  
vale,  
Beside the windless and crystalline  
pool,  
Where ever lies, on unerasing waves,  
The image of a temple built above,  
Distinct with column, arch, and  
architrave,  
And palm-like capital, and over-  
wrought,  
And populous most with living ima-  
gery,  
Praxitelean shapes, whose marble  
smiles  
Fill the hushed air with everlasting  
love.  
It is deserted now, but once it bore  
Thy name, Prometheus ; there the  
emulous youths  
Bore to thy honour through the divine  
gloom  
The lamp which was thine emblem ;  
even as those  
Who bear the untransmitted torch of  
hope

Into the grave, across the night of life,  
As thou hast borne it most triumph-  
antly  
To this far goal of Time. Depart,  
farewell.  
Beside that temple is the destined  
cave.

SCENE IV.—*A Forest. In the Back-  
ground a Cave.* PROMETHEUS,  
ASIA, PANTHEA, IONE, and the  
SPIRIT OF THE EARTH.

*Ione.* Sister, it is not earthly : how  
it glides

Under the leaves ! how on its head  
there burns

A light, like a green star, whose emerald  
beams

Are twined with its fair hair ! how, as  
it moves,

The splendour drops in flakes upon the  
grass !

Knowest thou it ?

*Panthea.* It is the delicate spirit  
That guides the earth through heaven.

From afar

The populous constellations call that  
light

The loveliest of the planets ; and  
sometimes

It floats along the spray of the salt sea,

Or makes its chariot of a foggy cloud,  
Or walks through fields or cities while

men sleep,  
Or o'er the mountain tops, or down  
the rivers,

Or through the green waste wilderness,  
as now,

Wondering at all it sees. Before  
Jove reigned

It loved our sister Asia, and it came  
Each leisure hour to drink the liquid

light  
Out of her eyes, for which it said it  
thirsted

As one bit by a dipsas, and with her  
It made its childish confidence, and  
told her

All it had known or seen, for it saw  
much,

Yet idly reasoned what it saw ; and  
called her,

For whence it sprung it knew not, nor  
do I,

Mother, dear Mother.

*The Spirit of the Earth (running  
to Asia).* Mother, dearest mother,  
May I then talk with thee as I was  
wont ?

May I then hide my eyes in thy soft  
arms,

After thy looks have made them tired  
of joy ?

May I then play beside thee the long  
noons,

When work is none in the bright silent  
air ?

*Asia.* I love thee, gentlest being !  
and henceforth

Can cherish thee unenvied. Speak, I  
pray,

Thy simple talk once solaced, now de-  
lights.

*Spirit of the Earth.* Mother, I am  
grown wiser, though child

Cannot be wise like thee, within this  
day ;

And happier too ; happier and wiser  
both.

Thou knowest that toads, and snakes,  
and loathly worms,

And venomous and malicious beasts,  
and boughs

That bore ill berries in the woods, were  
ever

A hindrance to my walks o'er the  
green world :

And that, among the haunts of  
humankind,

Hard-featured men, or with proud,  
angry looks,

Of cold, staid gait, or false and hollow  
smiles,

Or the dull sneer of self-loved ignor-  
ance,

Or other such foul masks, with which  
ill thoughts

Hide that fair being whom we spirits  
call man ;

And women too, ugliest of all things  
evil,

(Though fair, even in a world where  
thou art fair,

When good and kind, free and sincere  
like thee),

When false or frowning made me sick  
at heart

To pass them, though they slept, and  
I unseen.

Well, my path lately lay through a  
great city

Into the woody hills surrounding it :  
 A sentinel was sleeping at the gate :  
 When there was heard a sound, so  
 loud, it shook  
 The towers amid the moonlight, yet  
 more sweet  
 Than any voice but thine, sweetest of  
 all ;  
 A long, long sound, as it would never  
 end :  
 And all the inhabitants leapt suddenly  
 Out of their rest, and gathered in the  
 streets,  
 Looking in wonder up to Heaven,  
 while yet  
 The music pealed along. I hid my-  
 self  
 Within a fountain in the public square,  
 Where I lay like the reflex of the  
 moon  
 Seen in a wave under green leaves ;  
 and soon  
 Those ugly human shapes and visages  
 Of which I spoke as having wrought  
 me pain,  
 Past floating through the air, and fad-  
 ing still  
 Into the winds that scattered them ;  
 and those  
 From whom they past seemed mild  
 and lovely forms  
 After some foul disguise had fallen,  
 and all  
 Were somewhat changed, and after  
 brief surprise  
 And greetings of delighted wonder,  
 all  
 Went to their sleep again : and when  
 the dawn  
 Came, wouldst thou think that toads,  
 and snakes, and efts,  
 Could e'er be beautiful ? yet so they  
 were,  
 And that with little change of shape  
 or hue :  
 All things had put their evil nature  
 off :  
 I cannot tell my joy, when o'er a lake  
 Upon a drooping bough with night-  
 shade twined,  
 I saw two azure halcyons clinging  
 downward,  
 And thinning one bright bunch of  
 amber berries,  
 With quick long beaks, and in the deep  
 there lay

S.P.

Those lovely forms imaged as in a  
 sky ;  
 So with my thoughts full of these  
 happy changes,  
 We meet again, the happiest change  
 of all  
*Asia.* And never will we part, till  
 thy chaste sister,  
 Who guides the frozen and inconstant  
 moon,  
 Will look on thy more warm and equal  
 light  
 Till her heart thaw like flakes of April  
 snow,  
 And love thee.  
*Spirit of the Earth.* What ! as  
*Asia* loves Prometheus ?  
*Asia.* Peace, wanton ! thou art yet  
 not old enough.  
 Think ye by gazing on each other's  
 eyes  
 To multiply your lovely selves, and fill  
 With sphered fires the interlunar air ?  
*Spirit of the Earth.* Nay, mother,  
 while my sister trims her lamp  
 'Tis hard I should go darkling.  
*Asia.* Listen ; look !  
 [THE SPIRIT OF THE HOUR enters.  
*Prometheus.* We feel what thou  
 hast heard and seen : yet speak.  
*Spirit of the Hour.* Soon as the  
 sound had ceased whose thunder  
 filled  
 The abysses of the sky and the wide  
 earth,  
 There was a change : the impalpable  
 thin air  
 And the all-circling sunlight were  
 transformed,  
 As if the sense of love, dissolved in  
 them,  
 Had folded itself round the sphered  
 world.  
 My vision then grew clear, and I could  
 see  
 Into the mysteries of the universe :  
 Dizzy as with delight I floated down,  
 Winnowing the lightsome air with  
 languid plumes,  
 My coursers sought their birth-place  
 in the sun,  
 Where they henceforth will live ex-  
 empt from toil,  
 Pasturing flowers of vegetable fire.  
 And where my moonlike car will stand  
 within



<p>A temple, gazed upon by Phidian forms Of thee, and Asia, and the Earth, and me, And you fair nymphs, looking the love we feel ; In memory of the tidings it has borne ; Beneath a dome fretted with graven flowers, Poised on twelve columns of re- splendent stone, And open to the bright and liquid sky. Yoked to it by an amphisbænic snake The likeness of those winged steeds will mock The flight from which they find repose. Alas ! Whither has wandered now my partial tongue When all remains untold which ye would hear ? As I have said, I floated to the earth : It was, as it is still, the pain of bliss To move, to breathe, to be ; I wand- ering went Among the haunts and dwellings of mankind, And first was disappointed not to see Such mighty change, as I had felt within, Expressed in outward things ; but soon I looked, And behold, thrones were kingless, and men walked One with the other even as spirits do, None fawned, none trampled ; hate, disdain, or fear, Self-love or self-contempt, on human brows No more inscribed, as o'er the gate of heli, " All hope abandon, ye who enter here : " None frow'd, none trembled, none with eager fear Gazed on another's eye of cold com- mand, Until the subject of a tyrant's will Became, worse fate, the object of his own, Which spurred him, like an outspent horse, to death. None wrought his lips in truth-entang- ling lines Which smiled the lie his tongue dis- dained to speak ;</p>	<p>None, with firm sneer, trod out in his own heart The sparks of love and hope all there remained Those bitter ashes, a soul self-con- sumed, And the wretch crept a vampire among men, Infecting all with his own hideous ill ; None talked that common, false, cold, hollow talk Which makes the heart deny the <i>yes</i> it breathes, Yet question that unmeant hypo- crisy With such a self-mistrust as has no name. And women, too, frank, beautiful, and kind As the free heaven which rains fresh light and dew On the wide earth, passed gentle radi- ant forms, From custom's evil taint exempt and pure ; Speaking the wisdom once they could not think, Looking emotions once they feared to feel, And changed to all which once they dared not be, Yet being now, made earth like heaven. Nor pride, Nor jealousy, nor envy, nor ill-shame, The bitterest of those drops of trea- sured gall, Spoilt the sweet taste of the nepenthe, love. Thrones, altars, judgment-seats, and prisons—wherein, And beside which, by wretched men were borne Sceptres, tiaras, swords, and chains, and tomes Of reasoned wrong, glozed on by ig- norance— Were like those monstrous and bar- baric shapes, The ghosts of a no more-remembered fame, Which, from their unworn obelisks, look forth In triumph o'er the palaces and tomb ; Of those who were their conquerors : mouldering round.</p>
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Those imaged to the pride of kings and  
priests,  
A dark yet mighty faith, a power as  
wide  
As is the world it wasted, and are now  
But an astonishment; even so the  
tools  
And emblems of its last captivity,  
Amid the dwellings of the peopled  
earth,  
Stand, not o'erthrown, but unregard-  
ed now.  
And those foul shapes, abhorred by  
god and man,  
Which, under many a name and many  
a form,  
Strange, savage, ghastly, dark, and  
execrable,  
Were Jupiter, the tyrant of the world;  
And which the nations, panic-stricken,  
served  
With blood, and hearts broken by  
long hope, and love  
Dragged to his altars soiled and  
garlandless,  
And slain among men's unreclaiming  
tears,  
Flattering the thing they feared,  
which fear was hate,  
Frown, mouldering fast, o'er their  
abandoned shrines,  
The painted veil, by those who were,  
called life,  
Which mimick'd, as with colours idly  
spread, [aside;  
All men believed and hoped, is torn  
The loathsome mask has fallen; the  
man remains—  
Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed,  
but man  
Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and na-  
tionless,  
Exempt from awe, worship, degree,  
the king  
Over himself; just, gentle, wise:  
but man.  
Passionless? no, yet free from guilt or  
pain,  
Which were, for his will made or suf-  
fered them,  
Nor yet exempt, though ruling them  
like slaves,  
From chance, and death, and muta-  
bility,  
The clogs of that which else might  
oversoar

The loftiest star of unascended heaven,  
Pinnacled dim in the intense inane.

ACT IV

SCENE.—*A part of the Forest near the  
Cave of PROMETHEUS. PANTHEA  
and IONE are sleeping: they awaken  
gradually during the first Song.*

VOICE OF UNSEEN SPIRITS.

The pale stars are gone!  
For the sun, their swift shepherd,  
To their folds them compelling,  
In the depths of the dawn,  
Hastes, in meteor-eclipsing array,  
and they flee  
Beyond his blue dwelling,  
As fawns flee the leopard,  
But where are ye?

*A train of dark Forms and Shadows  
passes by confusedly singing.*

Here, oh! here:  
We bear the bier  
Of the Father of many a cancelled  
year!  
Spectres we  
Of the dead Hours be,  
We bear Time to his tomb in eternity.

Strew, oh! strew  
Hair, not yew!  
Wet the dusty pall with tears, not  
dew!  
Be the faded flowers  
Of Death's bare bowers  
Spread on the corpse of the King of  
Hours!  
Haste, oh, haste!  
As shades are chased,  
Trembling, by day, from heaven's  
blue waste.  
We melt away,  
Like dissolving spray,  
From the children of a diviner day,  
With the lullaby  
Of winds that die  
On the bosom of their own harmony!

IONE.

What dark forms were they?

PANTHEA.

The past Hours weak and grey,  
With the spoil which their toil  
Raked together  
From the conquest but One could foil.

IONE.

Have they past ?

PANTHEA.

They have past ;  
They outspeeded the blast,  
While 'tis said, they are fled :

IONE.

Whither, oh ! whither ?

PANTHEA.

To the dark, to the past, to the  
dead.

VOICE OF UNSEEN SPIRITS.

Briglit clouds float in heaven,  
Dew-stars gleam on earth,  
Waves assemble on ocean,  
They are gathered and driven  
By the storm of delight, by the panic  
of glee !

They shake with emotion,  
They dance in their mirth.

But where are ye ?

The pine boughs are singing  
Old songs with new gladness,  
The billows and fountains  
Fresh music are flinging,  
Like the notes of a spirit from land  
and from sea ;

The storms mock the mountains  
With the thunder of gladness

But where are ye ?

*Ione.* What charioteers are these ?

*Panthea.* Where are their chariots ?

SEMICHORUS OF HOURS.

The voice of the Spirits of Air and of  
Earth

Have drawn back the figured curtain  
of sleep,

Which covered our being and dark-  
ened our birth

In the deep.

A VOICE.

In the deep ?

SEMICHORUS II.

Oh ! below the deep.

SEMICHORUS I.

A hundred ages we had been kept  
Cradled in visions of hate and care,  
And each one who waked as his  
brother slept,  
Found the truth—

SEMICHORUS II.

Worse than his visions were !

SEMICHORUS I.

We have heard the lute of Hope in  
sleep ;

We have known the voice of Love in  
dreams,

We have felt the wand of Power, and  
leap—

SEMICHORUS II.

As the billows leap in the morning  
beams.

CHORUS.

Weave the dance on the floor of the  
breeze,

Pierce with song heaven's silent  
light,

Enchant the day that too swiftly flees,  
To check its flight ere the cave of  
night.

Once the hungry Hours were hounds  
Which chased the day like a bleed-  
ing deer,

And it limped and stumbled with  
many wounds

Through the nightly dells of the  
desert year.

But now, oh ! weave the mystic  
measure

Of music, and dance, and shapes of  
light,

Let the Hours, and the spirits of  
might and pleasure,

Like the clouds and sunbeams,  
unite.

A VOICE.

Unite.

*Panthea.* See, where the Spirits of  
the human mind

Wrapt in sweet sounds, as in bright  
veils, approach,

CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

We join the throng

Of the dance and the song,

By the whirlwind of gladness borne  
along ;

As the flying-fish leap

From the Indian deep,

And mix with the sea-birds half-  
asleep.

CHORUS OF HOURS.

Whence come ye, so wild and so fleet,  
For sandals of lightning are on your  
feet,  
And your wings are soft and swift as  
thought,  
And your eyes are as love which is  
veiled not ?

CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

We come from the mind  
Of human kind,  
Which was late so dusk, and obscene,  
and blind ;  
Now, 'tis an ocean  
Of clear emotion,  
A heaven of serene and mighty mo-  
tion.

From that deep abyss  
Of wonder and bliss,  
Whose caverns are crystal palaces ;  
From those skyey towers  
Where Thought's crowned  
powers  
Sit watching your dance, ye happy  
Hours !

From the dim recesses  
Of woven caresses,  
Where lovers catch ye by your loose  
tresses,  
From the azure isles,  
Where sweet Wisdom smiles,  
Delaying your ships with her syren  
wiles.

From the temples high  
Of man's ear and eye,  
Roofed over Sculpture and Poesy ;  
From the murmurings  
Of the unsealed springs  
Where Science bedews his Dædal  
wings.

Years after years,  
Through blood, and tears,  
And a thick hell of hatreds, and hopes,  
and fears ;  
We waded and flew,  
And the islets were few  
Where the bud-blighted flowers of  
happiness grew.

Our feet now, every palm,  
Are sandalled with calm,

And the dew of our wings is a rain of  
balm ;

And, beyond our eyes,  
The human love lies,  
Which makes all it gazes on, Paradise.

CHORUS OF SPIRITS AND HOURS.

Then weave the web of the mystic  
measure  
From the depths of the sky and the  
ends of the earth,  
Come, swift Spirits of might and of  
pleasure,  
Fill the dance and the music of mirth,  
As the waves of a thousand streams  
rush by  
To an ocean of splendour and har-  
mony !

CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

Our spoil is won,  
Our task is done,  
We are free to dive, or soar ; or run ;  
Beyond and around,  
Or within the bound  
Which clips the world with darkness  
round,

We'll pass the eyes  
Of the starry skies  
Into the hoar deep to colonise :  
Death, Chaos, and Night,  
From the sound of our flight,  
Shall flee, like mist from a tempest's  
might.

And Earth, Air, and Light,  
And the Spirit of Might,  
Which drives round the stars in their  
fiery flight,  
And Love, Thought, and Breath,  
The powers that quell Death,  
Wherever we soar shall assemble be-  
neath.

And our singing shall build  
In the void's loose field  
A world for the Spirit of Wisdom to  
wield ;  
We will take our plan  
From the new world of man,  
And our work shall be called the Pro-  
methean.

CHORUS OF HOURS.

Break the dance, and scatter the  
song ;  
Let some depart, and some remain.

## SEMICHORUS I.

We, beyond heaven, are driven  
along :

## SEMICHORUS II.

Us the enchantments of earth re-  
tain :

## SEMICHORUS I.

Ceaseless, and rapid, and fierce, and  
free,  
With the Spirits which build a new  
earth and sea  
And a heaven where yet heaven could  
never be.

## SEMICHORUS II.

Solemn, and slow, and serene, and  
bright,  
Leading the Day, and outspeeding  
the Night,  
With the powers of a world of perfect  
light.

## SEMICHORUS I.

We whirl, singing loud, round the  
gathering sphere,  
Till the trees, and the beasts, and the  
clouds appear  
From its chaos made calm by love,  
not fear.

## SEMICHORUS II.

We encircle the ocean and mountains  
of earth,  
And the happy forms of its death and  
birth  
Change to the music of our sweet  
mirth.

## CHORUS OF HOURS AND SPIRITS.

Break the dance, and scatter the  
song,

Let some depart and some re-  
main,

Wherever we fly we lead along

In leashes, like star-beams, soft, yet  
strong,

The clouds that are heavy with  
love's sweet rain.

*Panthea.* Ha ! they are gone !

*Ione.* Yet feel you no delight  
From the past sweetness ?

*Panthea.* As the bare green hill  
When some soft cloud vanishes into  
rain,

Laughs with a thousand drops of  
sunny water

To the unpavilioned sky !

*Ione.* Even whilst we speak

New notes arise. What is that awful  
sound ?

*Panthea.* 'Tis the deep music of the  
rolling world,

Kindling within the strings of the  
waved air

Æolian modulations.

*Ione.* Listen too,

How every pause is filled with under-  
notes,

Clear, silver, icy, keen awakening  
tones,

Which pierce the sense, and live  
within the soul,

As the sharp stars pierce winter's  
crystal air

And gaze upon themselves within the  
sea.

*Panthea.* But see where, through  
two openings in the forest

Which hanging branches overcanopy,  
And where two runnels of a rivulet,

Between the close moss, violet in-  
woven,

Have made their path of melody, like  
sisters

Who part with sighs that they may  
meet in smiles,

Turning their dear disunion to an isle  
Of lovely grief, a wood of sweet sad  
thoughts ;

Two visions of strange radiance float  
upon

The ocean-like enchantment of strong  
sound,

Which flows intenser, keener, deeper  
yet

Under the ground and through the  
windless air.

*Ione.* I see a chariot like that thin-  
nest boat

In which the mother of the months is  
borne

By ebbing night into her western  
cave,

When she upsprings from interlunar  
dreams,

O'er which is curved an orblike  
canopy

Of gentle darkness, and the hills and  
woods

Distinctly seen through that dusk airy veil,  
 Regard like shapes in an enchanter's glass.  
 Its wheels are solid clouds, azure and gold,  
 Such as the genii of the thunder-storm  
 Pile on the floor of the illumined sea  
 When the sun rushes under it; they roll  
 And move and grow as with an inward wind;  
 Within it sits a winged infant, white  
 Its countenance, like the whiteness of bright snow,  
 Its plumes are as feathers of sunny frost,  
 Its limbs gleam white, through the wind-flowing folds  
 Of its white robe, woof of ethereal pearl.  
 Its hair is white, the brightness of white light  
 Scattered in strings; yet its two eyes are heavens  
 Of liquid darkness, which the Deity  
 Within seems pouring, as a storm is poured  
 From jagged clouds, out of their arrowy lashes,  
 Tempering the cold and radiant air around,  
 With fire that is not brightness; in its hand  
 It sways a quivering moonbeam, from whose point  
 A guiding power directs the chariot's prow  
 Over its wheeled clouds, which as they roll  
 Over the grass, and flowers, and waves, wake sounds,  
 Sweet as a singing rain of silver dew.  
*Panthea.* And from the other opening in the wood  
 Rushes, with loud and whirlwind harmony,  
 A sphere, which is as many thousand spheres,  
 Solid as crystal, yet through all its mass  
 Flow, as through empty space, music and light:  
 Ten thousand orbs involving and involved,  
 Purple and azure, white, green and golden,  
 Sphere within sphere; and every space between  
 Peopled with unimaginable shapes,  
 Such as ghosts dream dwell in the lampless deep,  
 Yet each inter-transpicuous, and they whirl  
 Over each other with a thousand motions,  
 Upon a thousand sightless axles spinning,  
 And with the force of self-destroying swiftness,  
 Intensely, slowly, solemnly, roll on,  
 Kindling with mingled sounds, and many tones,  
 Intelligible words and music wild.  
 With mighty whirl the multitudinous orb  
 Grinds the bright brook into an azure mist  
 Of elemental subtlety, like light;  
 And the wild odour of the forest flowers,  
 The music of the living grass and air,  
 The emerald light of leaf-entangled beams  
 Round its intense yet self-conflicting speed,  
 Seem kneaded into one ærial mass  
 Which drowns the sense. Within the orb itself,  
 Pillowed upon its alabaster arms,  
 Like to a child o'erwearied with sweet toil,  
 On its own folded wings, and wavy hair,  
 The Spirit of the Earth is laid asleep,  
 And you can see its little lips are moving,  
 Amid the changing light of their own smiles,  
 Like one who talks of what he loves in dream.  
*Ione.* 'Tis only mocking the orb's harmony.  
*Panthea.* And from a star upon its forehead, shoot,  
 Like swords of azure fire, or golden spears  
 With tyrant-quelling myrtle overtwined,  
 Embleming heaven and earth united now,

Vast beams like spokes of some invisible wheel  
 Which whirl as the orb whirls, swifter than thought,  
 Filling the abyss with sunlike lightnings,  
 And perpendicular now, and now transverse,  
 Pierce the dark soil, and as they pierce and pass,  
 Make bare the secrets of the earth's deep heart ;  
 Infinite mine of adamant and gold,  
 Valueless stones, and unimagined gems,  
 And caverns on crystalline columns poised  
 With vegetable silver overspread ;  
 Wells of unfathomed fire, and water-springs  
 Whence the great sea, even as a child is fed,  
 Whose vapours clothe earth's monarch-mountain tops  
 With kingly, ermine snow. The beams flash on [ruins]  
 And make appear the melancholy Of cancelled cycles ; anchors, beaks of ships :  
 Planks turned to marble ; quivers, helms, and spears,  
 And gorgon-headed targes, and the wheels  
 Of scythed chariots, and the emblazonry  
 Of trophies, standards, and armorial beasts,  
 Round which death laughed, sepulchred emblems  
 Of dead destruction, ruin within ruin !  
 The wrecks beside of many a city vast,  
 Whose population which the earth grew over  
 Was mortal, but not human ; see, they lie  
 Their monstrous works, and uncouth skeletons,  
 Their statues, homes and fanes ; prodigious shapes  
 Huddled in grey annihilation, split,  
 Jammed in the hard, black deep : and over these,  
 The anatomies of unknown winged things,  
 And fishes which were isles of living scale,

And serpents, bony chains, twisted around  
 The iron crags, or within heaps of dust  
 To which the tortuous strength of their last pangs  
 Had crushed the iron crags ; and over these  
 The jagged alligator, and the might Of earth-convulsing behemoth, which once  
 Were monarch beasts, and on the slimy shores,  
 And weed-overgrown continents of earth,  
 Increased and multiplied like summer worms  
 On an abandoned corpse, till the blue globe  
 Wrapt deluge round it like a cloak, and they  
 Yelled, gasped, and were abolished ; or some God,  
 Whose throne was in a comet, passed and cried,  
 "Be not !" And like my words they were no more.

## THE EARTH.

The joy, the triumph, the delight, the madness !  
 The boundless, overflowing, bursting gladness,  
 The vaporous exultation not to be confined !  
 Ha ! ha ! the animation of delight  
 Which wraps me, like an atmosphere of light,  
 And bears me as a cloud is borne by its own wind.

## THE MOON.

Brother mine, calm wanderer,  
 Happy globe of land and air ;  
 Some spirit is darted like a beam from thee,  
 Which penetrates my frozen frame,  
 And passes with the warmth of flame,  
 With love, and odour, and deep melody  
 Through me, through me !

## THE EARTH.

Ha ! ha ! the caverns of my hollow mountains,  
 My cloven fire-crags, sound-exulting fountains,

Laugh with a vast and inextinguishable laughter.

The oceans, and the deserts, and the abysses,  
And the deep air's unmeasured wildernesses,  
Answer from all their clouds and billows, echoing after.

They cry aloud as I do. Sceptred curse,  
Who all our green and azure universe  
Threatenedst to muffle round with black destruction, sending  
A solid cloud to rain hot thunderstones,  
And splinter and knead down my children's bones,  
All I bring forth, to one void mass battering and blending.

Until each crag-like tower, and storied column,  
Palace, and obelisk, and temple solemn,  
My imperial mountains crowned with cloud, and snow, and fire,  
My sea-like forests, every blade and blossom  
Which finds a grave or cradle in my bosom,  
Were stamped by thy strong hate into a lifeless mire.

How art thou sunk, withdrawn, covered, drunk up  
By thirsty nothing, as the brackish cup  
Drained by a desert-troop, a little drop for all ;  
And from beneath, around, within, above,  
Filling thy void annihilation, love  
Bursts in like light on caves cloven by the thunder-ball.

#### THE MOON.

The snow upon my lifeless mountains

Is loosened into living fountains,  
My solid oceans flow, and sing, and shine :

A spirit from my heart bursts forth,

It clothes with unexpected birth

My cold bare bosom ; Oh ! it must be thine

On mine, on mine !

Gazing on thee I feel, I know,  
Green stalks burst forth, and bright flowers grow,  
And living shapes upon my bosom move :

Music is in the sea and air,  
Winged clouds soar here and there,  
Dark with the rain new buds are dreaming of :  
'Tis love, all love !

#### THE EARTH.

It interpenetrates my granite mass ;  
Through tangled roots and trodden clay doth pass,  
Into the utmost leaves and delicatest flowers ;

Upon the winds, among the clouds, 'tis spread ;

It wakes a life in the forgotten dead,  
They breathe a spirit up from their obscurest bowers ;

And like a storm bursting its cloudy prison  
With thunder, and with whirlwind, has arisen

Out of the lampless caves of unimagined being :

With earthquake shock and swift-ness making shiver

Thought's stagnant chaos, unre-moved for ever,

Till hate, and fear, and pain, light-vanquished shadows, fleeing,

Leave Man, who was a many-sided mirror,

Which could distort to many a shape of error,

This true fair world of things, a sea reflecting love ;

Which over all his kind, as the sun's heaven

Gliding o'er ocean, smooth, serene, and even

Darting from starry depths radiance and light, doth move,

Leave Man, even as a leprous child is left,

Who follows a sick beast to some warm cleft



Of rocks, through which the might of  
 healing springs is poured ;  
 Then when it wanders home with  
 rosy smile,  
 Unconscious, and its mother fears  
 awhile  
 It is a spirit, then, weeps on her child  
 restored.

Man, oh, not men ! a chain of  
 linked thought,  
 Of love and might to be divided not,  
 Compelling the elements with ada-  
 mantine stress ;  
 As the sun rules, even with a ty-  
 rant's gaze,  
 The unquiet republic of the maze  
 Of planets, struggling fierce towards  
 heaven's free wilderness.

Man, one harmonious soul of many  
 a soul,  
 Whose nature is its own divine  
 control,  
 Where all things flow to all, as rivers  
 to the sea ;  
 Familiar acts are beautiful through  
 love ;  
 Labour, and pain, and grief, in life's  
 green grove  
 Sport like tame beasts, none knew  
 how gentle they could be !

His will, with all mean passions,  
 bad delights,  
 And selfish cares, its trembling  
 satellites,  
 A spirit ill to guide, but mighty to  
 obey,  
 Is as a tempest-winged ship, whose  
 helm  
 Love rules, through waves which  
 dare not overwhelm,  
 Forcing life's wildest shores to own its  
 sovereign sway.

All things confess his strength.  
 Through the cold mass  
 Of marble and of colour his dreams  
 pass ;  
 Bright threads whence mothers weave  
 the robes their children wear ;  
 Language is a perpetual Orphic  
 song,  
 Which rules with Dædal-harmony a  
 throng  
 Of thoughts and forms, which else  
 senseless and shapeless were.

The lightning is his slave ; heaven's  
 utmost deep  
 Gives up her stars, and like a flock  
 of sheep  
 They pass before his eye, are num-  
 bered, and roll on !  
 The tempest is his steed, he strides  
 the air ;  
 And the abyss shouts from her  
 depth laid bare,  
 Heaven, hast thou secrets ? Man  
 unveils me ; I have none.

#### THE MOON.

The shadow of white death has past  
 From my path in heaven at last,  
 A clinging shroud of solid frost and  
 sleep ;  
 And through my newly-woven  
 bowers,  
 Wander happy paramours,  
 Less mighty, but as mild as those  
 who keep  
 Thy vales more deep.

#### THE EARTH.

As the dissolving warmth of dawn  
 may fold  
 A half unfrozen dew-globe, green and  
 gold,  
 And crystalline, till it becomes a  
 winged mist,  
 And wanders up the vault of the  
 blue day,  
 Outlives the noon, and on the sun's  
 last ray  
 Hangs o'er the sea, a fleece of fire  
 and amethyst.

#### THE MOON.

Thou art folded, thou art lying  
 In the light which is undying  
 Of thine own joy, and heaven's  
 smile divine ;  
 All suns and constellations  
 shower  
 On thee a light, a life, a power  
 Which doth array thy sphere ; thou  
 pourest thine  
 On mine, on mine !

#### THE EARTH.

I spin beneath my pyramid of  
 night,  
 Which points into the heavens  
 dreaming delight,  
 Murmuring victorious joy in my en-  
 charmed sleep ;

As a youth lulled in love-dreams  
faintly sighing,  
Under the shadow of his beauty lying,  
Which round his rest a watch of light  
and warmth doth keep.

THE MOON.

As in the soft and sweet eclipse,  
When soul meets soul on lovers' lips,  
High hearts are calm, and brightest eyes are dull ;  
So, when thy shadow fails on me,  
Then am I mute and still, by thee Covered ; of thy love, Orb most beautiful,  
Full, oh, too full !

Thou art speeding round the sun,  
Brightest world of many a one ;  
Green and azure sphere which shinest

With a light which is divinest  
Among all the lamps of Heaven  
To whom life and light is given ;  
I, thy crystal paramour,  
Borne beside thee by a power  
Like the polar Paradise,  
Magnet-like, of lover's eyes ;  
I, a most enamoured maiden,  
Whose weak brain is overladen  
With the pleasure of her love,  
Maniac-like around thee move  
Gazing, an insatiate bride,  
On thy form from every side,  
Like a Mænad, round the cup  
Which Agave lifted up  
In the weird Cadmæan forest.  
Brother, wheresoe'er thou soarest

I must hurry, whirl and follow  
Through the heavens wide and hollow,  
Sheltered by the warm embrace  
Of thy soul from hungry space,  
Drinking from thy sense and sight

Beauty, majesty, and might,  
As a lover orameleon  
Grows like what it looks upon,  
As a violet's gentle eye  
Gazes on the azure sky  
Until its hue grows like what it beholds,  
As a grey and watery mist

Glows like solid amethyst  
Athwart the western mountain it enfolds  
When the sunset sleeps  
Upon its snow.

THE EARTH.

And the weak day weeps  
That it should be so.  
O gentle Moon, the voice of thy delight  
Falls on me like thy clear and tender light  
Soothing the seaman, borne the summer night  
Through isles for ever calm ;  
O gentle Moon, thy crystal accents pierce  
The caverns of my pride's deep universe,  
Charming the tiger joy, whose tramlings fierce  
Made wounds which need thy balm.

*Panthea.* I rise as from a bath of sparkling water,  
A bath of azure light, among dark rocks,  
Out of the stream of sound.

*Ione.* Ah me ! sweet sister,  
The stream of sound has ebbed away from us,  
And you pretend to rise out of its wave,  
Because your words fall like the clear soft dew  
Shaken from a bathing wood-nymph's limbs and hair.

*Panthea.* Peace, peace ! a mighty power, which is as darkness,  
Is rising out of Earth, and from the sky  
Is showered like night, and from within the air  
Bursts, like eclipse which had been gathered up  
Into the pores of sunlight : the bright visions,  
Wherein the singing spirits rode and shone,  
Gleam like pale meteors through a watery night.

*Ione.* There is a sense of words upon mine ear.

*Panthea.* A universal sound like words : Oh ! list,

DEMOGORGON.

Thou, Earth, calm empire of a happy  
soul,  
Sphere of divinest shapes and har-  
monies,  
Beautiful orb ! gathering as thou dost  
roll  
The love which paves thy path  
along the skies.

THE EARTH.

I hear : I am as a drop of dew that  
dies.

DEMOGORGON.

Thou Moon, which gazest on the  
nightly Earth  
With wonder, as it gazes upon thee ;  
Whilst each to men, and beasts, and  
the swift birth  
Of birds, is beauty, love, calm, har-  
mony :

THE MOON.

I hear : I am a leaf shaken by thee !

DEMOGORGON.

Ye kings of suns and stars ! Dæmons  
and Gods,  
Ethereal Dominations ! who pos-  
sess  
Elysian, windless, fortunate abodes  
Beyond Heaven's constellated wil-  
derness.

A VOICE FROM ABOVE.

Our great Republic hears ; we are  
blest, and bless.

DEMOGORGON.

Ye happy dead ! whom beams of  
brightest verse  
Are clouds to hide, not colours to  
portray,  
Whether your nature is that universe  
Which once ye saw and suffered—

A VOICE FROM BENEATH.

Or as they  
Whom we have left, we change and  
pass away.

DEMOGORGON.

Ye elemental Genii, who have homes  
From man's high mind, even to the  
central stone  
Of sullen lead ; from Heaven's star-  
fretted domes

To the dull weed some sea-worm  
battens on :

A CONFUSED VOICE.

We hear : thy words waken Oblivion.

DEMOGORGON.

Spirits ! whose homes are flesh : ye  
beasts and birds,  
Ye worms and fish ; ye living  
leaves and buds ;  
Lightning and wind ; and ye un-  
tameable herds,  
Meteors and mists, which throng  
air's solitudes.

A VOICE.

Thy voice to us is wind among still  
woods.

DEMOGORGON.

Man, who wert once a despot and a  
slave ;  
A dupe and a deceiver ; a decay ;  
A traveller from the cradle to the  
grave  
Through the dim night of this im-  
mortal day :

ALL.

Speak ! thy strong words may never  
pass away.

DEMOGORGON.

This the day, which down the void  
abysm  
At the Earth-born's spell yawns for  
heaven's despotism,  
And conquest is dragged captive  
through the deep ;  
Love, from its awful throne of patient  
power  
In the wise heart, from the last giddy  
hour  
Of dread endurance, from the  
slippery steep,  
And narrow verge of craze-like agony,  
springs  
And folds over the world its healing  
wings.  
Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and En-  
durance,  
These are the seals of that most firm  
assurance  
Which bars the pit over Destruc-  
tion's strength ;

And if, with infirm hand, Eternity,  
Mother of many acts and hours,  
should free

The serpent that would clasp her  
with his length,  
These are the spells by which to re-  
assume

An empire o'er the disentangled  
doom.

To suffer woes which Hope thinks in-  
finite ;

To forgive wrongs darker than death  
or night ;

To defy Power, which seems omni-  
potent ;

To love, and bear ; to hope till Hope  
creates

From its own wreck the thing it con-  
templates

Neither to change, nor falter, nor  
repent ;

This, like thy glory, Titan ! is to be  
Good, great and joyous, beautiful  
and free ;

This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and  
Victory !

## THE CENCI

### A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS

#### DEDICATION

TO LEIGH HUNT, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I INSCRIBE with your name, from a  
distant country, and after an absence  
whose months have seemed years,  
this the latest of my literary efforts.

Those writings which I have hither-  
to published, have been little else  
than visions which impersonate my  
own apprehensions of the beautiful  
and the just. I can also perceive in  
them the literary defects incidental  
to youth and impatience ; they are  
dreams of what ought to be, or may  
be. The drama which I now present  
to you is a sad reality. I lay aside  
the presumptuous attitude of an in-  
structor, and am content to paint,  
with such colours as my own heart  
furnishes, that which has been.

Had I known a person more  
highly endowed than yourself with all  
that it becomes a man to possess, I  
had solicited for this work the orna-  
ment of his name. One more gentle,  
honourable, innocent and brave ; one  
of more exalted toleration for all who  
do and think evil, and yet himself  
more free from evil ; one who knows  
better how to receive, and how to

confer a benefit, though he must ever  
confer far more than he can receive ;  
one of simpler, and, in the highest  
sense of the word, of purer life and  
manners, I never knew ; and I had  
already been fortunate in friendships  
when your name was added to the  
list.

In that patient and irreconcilable  
enmity with domestic and political  
tyranny and imposture which the  
tenor of your life has illustrated, and  
which, had I health and talents,  
should illustrate mine, let us, com-  
forting each other in our task, live  
and die.

All happiness attend you !

Your affectionate friend,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

ROME, May 29, 1819.

#### PREFACE

A MANUSCRIPT was communicated to  
me during my travels in Italy, which  
was copied from the archives of the  
Cenci Palace at Rome, and contains a  
detailed account of the horrors which  
ended in the extinction of one of the  
noblest and richest families of that  
city during the Pontificate of Clement

VIII, in the year 1599. The story is that an old man, having spent his life in debauchery and wickedness, conceived at length an implacable hatred towards his children; which showed itself towards one daughter under the form of an incestuous passion, aggravated by every circumstance of cruelty and violence. This daughter, after long and vain attempts to escape from what she considered a perpetual contamination both of body and mind, at length plotted with her mother-in-law and brother to murder their common tyrant. The young maiden, who was urged to this tremendous deed by an impulse which overpowered its horror, was evidently a most gentle and amiable being; a creature formed to adorn and be admired, and thus violently thwarted from her nature by the necessity of circumstances and opinion. The deed was quickly discovered; and, in spite of the most earnest prayers made to the Pope by the highest persons in Rome, the criminals were put to death. The old man had, during his life, repeatedly bought his pardon from the Pope for capital crimes of the most enormous and unspeakable kind, at the price of a hundred thousand crowns; the death, therefore, of his victims can scarcely be accounted for by the love of justice. The Pope, among other motives for severity, probably felt that whosoever killed the Count Cenci deprived his treasury of a certain and copious source of revenue.<sup>1</sup> Such a story, if told so as to present to the reader all the feelings of those who once acted it, their hopes and fears, their confidences and misgivings, their various interests, passions, and opinions, acting upon and with each other, yet all conspiring to one tremendous end, would be as a light to make apparent some of

the most dark and secret caverns of the human heart.

On my arrival at Rome, I found that the story of the Cenci was a subject not to be mentioned in Italian society without awakening a deep and breathless interest: and that the feelings of the company never failed to incline to a romantic pity for the wrongs, and a passionate exculpation of the horrible deed to which they urged her, who has been mingled two centuries with the common dust. All ranks of people knew the outlines of this history, and participated in the overwhelming interest which it seems to have the magic of exciting in the human heart. I had a copy of Guido's picture of Beatrice, which is preserved in the Colonna Palace, and my servant instantly recognised it as the portrait of *La Cenci*.

This national and universal interest which the story produces and has produced for two centuries, and among all ranks of people in a great city, where the imagination is kept for ever active and awake, first suggested to me the conception of its fitness for a dramatic purpose. In fact, it is a tragedy which has already received, from its capacity of awakening and sustaining the sympathy of men, approbation and success. Nothing remained, as I imagined, but to clothe it to the apprehensions of my countrymen in such language and action as would bring it home to their hearts. The deepest and the sublimest tragic compositions, *King Lear*, and the two plays in which the tale of *Œdipus* is told, were stories which already existed in tradition, as matters of popular belief and interest, before Shakspeare and Sophocles made them familiar to the sympathy of all succeeding generations of mankind.

This story of the Cenci is indeed eminently fearful and monstrous; anything like a dry exhibition of it on the stage would be insupportable. The person who would treat such a subject must increase the ideal, and diminish the actual horror of the events, so that the pleasure which arises from the poetry which exists

<sup>1</sup> The Papal Government formerly took the most extraordinary precautions against the publicity of facts which offer so tragical a demonstration of its own wickedness and weakness; so that the communication of the MS. had become, until very lately, a matter of some difficulty.

in these tempestuous sufferings and crimes, may mitigate the pain of the contemplation of the moral deformity from which they spring. There must also be nothing attempted to make the exhibition subservient to what is vulgarly termed a moral purpose. The highest moral purpose aimed at in the highest species of the drama, is the teaching of the human heart, through its sympathies and antipathies, the knowledge of itself; in proportion to the possession of which knowledge every human being is wise, just, sincere, tolerant, and kind. If dogmas can do more, it is well: but a drama is no fit place for the enforcement of them. Undoubtedly no person can be truly dishonoured by the act of another; and the fit return to make to the most enormous injuries is kindness and forbearance, and a resolution to convert the injurer from his dark passions by peace and love. Revenge, retaliation, atonement, are pernicious mistakes. If Beatrice had thought in this manner, she would have been wiser and better; but she would never have been a tragic character: the few whom such an exhibition would have interested, could never have been sufficiently interested for a dramatic purpose, from the want of finding sympathy in their interest among the mass who surround them. It is in the restless and anatomising casuistry with which men seek the justification of Beatrice, yet feel that she has done what needs justification; it is in the superstitious horror with which they contemplate alike her wrongs and their revenge, that the dramatic character of what she did and suffered consists.

I have endeavoured as nearly as possible to represent the characters as they probably were, and have sought to avoid the error of making them actuated by my own conceptions of right or wrong, false or true: thus under a thin veil converting names and actions of the sixteenth century into cold impersonations of my own mind. They are represented as Catholics, and as Catholics deeply tinged with religion. To a Protest-

ant apprehension there will appear something unnatural in the earnest and perpetual sentiment of the relations between God and man which pervade the tragedy of the Cenci. It will especially be startled at the combination of an undoubting persuasion of the truth of the popular religion, with a cool and determined perseverance in enormous guilt. But religion in Italy is not, as in Protestant countries, a cloak to be worn on particular days; or a passport which those who do not wish to be railed at carry with them to exhibit; or a gloomy passion for penetrating the impenetrable mysteries of our being, which terrifies its possessor at the darkness of the abyss to the brink of which it has conducted him. Religion co-exists, as it were, in the mind of an Italian Catholic with a faith in that of which all men have the most certain knowledge. It is interwoven with the whole fabric of life. It is adoration, faith, submission, penitence, blind admiration; not a rule for moral conduct. It has no necessary connexion with any one virtue. The most atrocious villain may be rigidly devout, and, without any shock to established faith, confess himself to be so. Religion pervades intensely the whole frame of society, and is, according to the temper of the mind which it inhabits, a passion, a persuasion, an excuse, a refuge; never a check. Cenci himself built a chapel in the court of his palace, and dedicated it to St. Thomas the Apostle, and established masses for the peace of his soul. Thus in the first scene of the fourth act, Lucretia's design in exposing herself to the consequences of an expostulation with Cenci after having administered the opiate, was to induce him by a feigned tale to confess himself before death; this being esteemed by Catholics as essential to salvation; and she only relinquishes her purpose when she perceives that her perseverance would expose Beatrice to new outrages.

I have avoided with great care in writing this play the introduction of what is commonly called *meré* poetry;

and I imagine there will scarcely be found a detached simile or a single isolated description, unless Beatrice's description of the chasm appointed for her father's murder should be judged to be of that nature.<sup>1</sup>

In a dramatic composition the imagery and the passion should interpenetrate one another, the former being reserved simply for the full development and illustration of the latter. Imagination is as the immortal God which should assume flesh for the redemption of mortal passion. It is thus that the most remote and the most familiar imagery may alike be fit for dramatic purposes when employed in the illustration of strong feeling, which raises what is low, and levels to the apprehension that which is lofty, casting over all the shadow of its own greatness. In other respects I have written more carelessly; that is, without an over-fastidious and learned choice of words. In this respect, I entirely agree with those modern critics who assert, that in order to move men to true sympathy, we must use the familiar language of men; and that our great ancestors, the ancient English poets, are the writers a study of whom might incite us to do that for our own age which they have done for theirs. But it must be the real language of men in general, and not that of any particular class to whose society the writer happens to belong. So much for what I have attempted: I need not be assured that success is a very different matter; particularly for one whose attention has but newly been awakened to the study of dramatic literature.

I endeavoured whilst at Rome to observe such monuments of this story as might be accessible to a stranger. The portrait of Beatrice at the Colonna Palace is most admirable as a work of art: it was taken by Guido during her confinement in prison. But it is most interesting as a just representation of one of the loveliest specimens

of the workmanship of Nature. There is a fixed and pale composure upon the features: she seems sad and stricken down in spirit, yet the despair thus expressed is lightened by the patience of gentleness. Her head is bound with folds of white drapery, from which the yellow strings of her golden hair escape, and fall about her neck. The moulding of her face is exquisitely delicate; the eye-brows are distinct and arched; the lips have that permanent meaning of imagination and sensibility which suffering has not repressed, and which it seems as if death scarcely could extinguish. Her forehead is large and clear; her eyes, which we are told were remarkable for their vivacity, are swollen with weeping and lustreless, but beautifully tender and serene. In the whole mien there is a simplicity and dignity which, united with her exquisite loveliness and deep sorrow, are inexpressibly pathetic. Beatrice Cenci appears to have been one of those rare persons in whom energy and gentleness dwell together without destroying one another: her nature was simple and profound. The crimes and miseries in which she was an actor and a sufferer, are as the mask and the mantle in which circumstances clothed her for her impersonation on the scene of the world.

The Cenci Palace is of great extent; and, though in part modernised, there yet remains a vast and gloomy pile of feudal architecture in the same state as during the dreadful scenes which are the subject of this tragedy. The palace is situated in an obscure corner of Rome, near the quarter of the Jews, and from the upper windows you see the immense ruins of Mount Palatine, half hidden under their profuse overgrowth of trees. There is a court in one part of the palace (perhaps that in which Cenci built the chapel to St. Thomas), supported by granite columns and adorned with antique friezes of fine workmanship, and built up, according to the ancient Italian fashion, with balcony over balcony of open work. One of the gates of the palace, formed of im-

<sup>1</sup> An idea in this speech was suggested by a most sublime passage in *El Purgatorio de San Patricio*, of Calderon: the only plagiarism which I have intentionally committed in the whole piece.

mense stones, and leading through a passage dark and lofty, and opening into gloomy subterranean chambers, struck me particularly.

Of the Castle of Petrella, I could obtain no further information than that which is to be found in the manuscript.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

COUNT FRANCESCO CENCI  
GIACOMO } *his Sons*  
BERNARDO }  
CARDINAL CAMILLO

ORSINO a *Prelate*  
SAVELLA *the Pope's Legate*  
OLIMPIO } *Assassins*  
MARZIO }

ANDREA, *Servant to CENCI*  
*Nobles, Judges, Guards, Servants*  
LUCRETIA, *Wife of CENCI, and stepmother of his children*  
BEATRICE, *his daughter*

*The SCENE lies principally in Rome, but changes during the Fourth Act to Petrella, a Castle among the Apulian Apennines.*

TIME.—During the Pontificate of Clement VIII.

ACT 1

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Cenci Palace.*

*Enter COUNT CENCI and CARDINAL CAMILLO.*

*Camillo.* That matter of the murder is hushed up  
If you consent to yield his Holiness Your fief that lies beyond the Pincian gate.—

It needed all my interest in the conclave

To bend him to this point: he said that you

Bought perilous impunity with your gold;

That crimes like yours if once or twice compounded

Enriched the Church, and respited from hell

An erring soul which might repent and live:

But that the glory and the interest Of the high throne he fills, little consist

With making it a daily mart of guilt So manifold and hideous as the deeds Which you scarce hide from men's revolted eyes.

*Cenci.* The third of my possessions—let it go!

Ay, I once heard the nephew of the Pope

Had sent his architect to view the ground,

S.P.

Meaning to build a villa on my vines  
The next time I compounded with his uncle:

I little thought he should outwit me so!

Henceforth no witness—not the lamp—shall see

That which the vassal threatened to divulge.

Whose throat is choked with dust for his reward.

The deed he saw could not have rated higher

Than his most worthless life:—it angers me!

[*Devil*] Respited from Hell!—So may the

Respite their souls from Heaven. No doubt Pope Clement,

And his most charitable nephews, pray

That the Apostle Peter and the saints Will grant for their sake that I long enjoy

Strength, wealth, and pride, and lust, and length of days,

Wherein to act the deeds which are the stewards

Of their revenue.—But much yet remains

To which they show no title. *Camillo.* Oh, Count Cenci!

So much that thou mightst honourably live,

And reconcile thyself with thine own heart

And with thy God, and with the offended world.

P



How hideously look deeds of lust and blood

Through those snow-white and venerable hairs !

Your children should be sitting round you now,

But that you fear to read upon their looks

The shame and misery you have written there.

Where is your wife ? Where is your gentle daughter ?

Methinks her sweet looks, which make all things else

Beauteous and glad, might kill the fiend within you.

Why is she barred from all society But her own strange and uncomplaining wrongs ?

Talk with me, Count, you know I mean you well.

I stood beside your dark and fiery youth,

Watching its bold and bad career, as men

Watch meteors, but it vanished not—I marked

Your desperate and remorseless manhood ; now

Do I behold you, in dishonoured age, Charged with a thousand unrepented crimes. [amend,

Yet I have ever hoped you would And in that hope have saved your life three times.

*Cenci.* For which Aldobrandino owes you now

My fief beyond the Pincian—Cardinal.

One thing, I pray you, recollect henceforth,

And so we shall converse with less restraint.

A man you knew spoke of my wife and daughter,

He was accustomed to frequent my house ;

So the next day *his* wife and daughter came

And asked if I had seen him ; and I smiled :

I think they never saw him any more.

*Camillo.* Thou execrable man, beware !—

*Cenci.* Of thee ?

Nay, this is idle :—We should know each other.

As to my character for what men call crime,

Seeing I please my senses as I list, And vindicate that right with force or guile,

It is a public matter, and I care not If I discuss it with you. I may speak Alike to you and my own conscious heart,

For you give out that you have half reformed me,

Therefore strong vanity will keep you silent

If fear should not ; both will, I do not doubt.

All men delight in sensual luxury, All men enjoy revenge ; and most exult

Over the tortures they can never feel ; Flattering their secret peace with others' pain.

But I delight in nothing else. I love The sight of agony, and the sense of joy,

When this shall be another's, and that mine.

And I have no remorse, and little fear, Which are, I think, the checks of other men.

This mood has grown upon me, until now

Any design my captious fancy makes The picture of its wish, and it forms none

But such as men like you would start to know,

Is as my natural food and rest debarred

Until it be accomplished.

*Camillo.* Art thou not

Most miserable ?

*Cenci.* Why miserable ?—

No. I am what your theologians call Hardened ; which they must be in impudence,

So to revile a man's peculiar taste.

True, I was happier than I am, while yet

Manhood remained to act the thing I thought ;

While lust was sweeter than revenge ; and now

Invention palls ; ay, we must all grow old :

But that there yet remains a deed to act

Whose horror might make sharp an appetite  
 Duller than mine—I'd do,—I know not what.  
 When I was young I thought of nothing else  
 But pleasure; and I fed on honey sweets:  
 Men, by St. Thomas! cannot live like bees,  
 And I grew tired: yet, till I killed a foe,  
 And heard his groans, and heard his children's groans,  
 Knew I not what delight was else on earth,  
 Which now delights me little. I the rather  
 Look on such pangs as terror ill con-  
 The dry, fixed eyeball; the pale, quivering lip,  
 Which tell me that the spirit weeps within  
 Tears bitterer than the bloody sweat of Christ.  
 I rarely kill the body, which preserves,  
 Like a strong prison, the soul within my power,  
 Wherein I feed it with the breath of fear  
 For hourly pain.  
*Camillo.* Hell's most abandoned fiend  
 Did never, in the drunkenness of guilt,  
 Speak to his heart as now you speak to me;  
 I thank my God that I believe you not.

*Enter ANDREA.*

*Andrea.* My lord, a gentleman from Salamanca  
 Would speak with you.  
*Cenci.* Bid him attend me in the grand saloon. [*Exit ANDREA.*]  
*Camillo.* Farewell; and I will pray Almighty God that thy false impious words  
 Tempt not his spirit to abandon thee. [*Exit CAMILLO.*]  
*Cenci.* The third of my possessions! I must use  
 Close husbandry, or gold, the old man's sword,  
 Falls from my withered hand. But yesterday

There came an order from the Pope to make  
 Fourfold provision for my cursed sons;  
 Whom I have sent from Rome to Salamanca,  
 Hoping some accident might cut them off;  
 And meaning, if I could, to starve them there.  
 I pray thee, God, send some quick death upon them!  
 Bernardo and my wife could not be worse  
 If dead and damned:—then, as to Beatrice—  
 [*Looking around him suspiciously.*]  
 I think they cannot hear me at that door;  
 What if they should? And yet I need not speak,  
 Though the heart triumphs with itself in words.  
 O, thou most silent air, that shalt not hear  
 What now I think! Thou, pavement, which I tread  
 Towards her chamber,—let your echoes talk  
 Of my imperious step, scorning surprise,  
 But not of my intent!—Andrea!

*Enter ANDREA.*

*Andrea.* My lord!  
*Cenci.* Bid Beatrice attend me in her chamber  
 This evening:—no, at midnight, and alone. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Garden of the Cenci Palace.*

*Enter BEATRICE and ORSINO, as in conversation.*

*Beatrice.* Pervert not truth,  
*Orsino.* You remember where we held  
 That conversation;—nay, we see the spot  
 Even from this cypress;—two long years are past  
 Since, on an April midnight, underneath  
 The moonlight-ruins of Mount Palatine,

I did confess to you my secret mind.  
*Orsino.* You said you loved me then.

*Beatrice.* You are a priest :  
 Speak to me not of love.

*Orsino.* I may obtain  
 The dispensation of the Pope to marry.

Because I am a priest, do you believe  
 Your image, as the hunter some  
 struck deer,  
 Follows me not whether I wake or  
 sleep ?

*Beatrice.* As I have said, speak to  
 me not of love ;

Had you a dispensation, I have not ;  
 Nor will I leave this home of misery  
 Whilst my poor Bernard, and that  
 gentle lady

To whom I owe life, and these virtu-  
 ous thoughts,  
 Must suffer what I still have strength  
 to share.

Alas, Orsino ! All the love that once  
 I felt for you, is turned to bitter pain.  
 Ours was a youthful contract, which  
 you first

Broke, by assuming vows no Pope  
 will loose.

And thus I love you still, but holily,  
 Even as a sister or a spirit might ;  
 And so I swear a cold fidelity.

And it is well perhaps we shall not  
 marry.

You have a sly, equivocating vein  
 That suits me not.—Ah, wretched  
 that I am !

Where shall I turn ? Even now you  
 look on me

As you were not my friend, and as if  
 you

Discovered that I thought so, with  
 false smiles [wrong.

Making my true suspicion seem your  
 Ah ! No, forgive me ; sorrow makes  
 me seem

Sternier than else my nature might  
 have been ;

I have a weight of melancholy  
 thoughts,  
 And they forebode,—but what can  
 they forebode

Worse than I now endure ?

*Orsino.* All will be well.  
 Is the petition yet prepared ? You  
 know

My zeal for all you wish, sweet  
 Beatrice ;

Doubt not but I will use my utmost  
 skill

So that the Pope attend to your com-  
 plaint.

*Beatrice.* Your zeal for all I wish ?  
 —Ah me, you are cold !

Your utmost skill—speak but one  
 word—(*Aside.*) Alas !

Weak and deserted creature that I am,  
 Here I stand bickering with my only  
 friend !

(*To ORSINO.*) This night my father  
 gives a sumptuous feast,

Orsino ; he has heard some happy  
 news

From Salamanca, from my brothers  
 there,

And with this outward show of love  
 he mocks

His inward hate. 'Tis bold hypocrisy,  
 For he would gladlier celebrate their  
 deaths,

Which I have heard him pray for on  
 his knees :

Great God ! that such a father should  
 be mine !—

But there is mighty preparation  
 made,

And all our kin, the Cenci, will be  
 there,

And all the chief nobility of Rome.  
 And he has bidden me and my pale  
 mother

Attire ourselves in festival array.

Poor lady ! she expects some happy  
 change

In his dark spirit from this act ; I  
 none.

At supper I will give you the petition :  
 Till when—farewell.

*Orsino.* Farewell. [*Exit BEATRICE.*  
 I know the Pope

Will ne'er absolve me from my  
 priestly vow

But by absolving me from the revenue  
 Of many a wealthy see ; and, Bea-  
 trice,

I think to win thee at an easier rate.  
 Nor shall he read her eloquent peti-  
 tion :

He might bestow her on some poor  
 relation

Of his sixth-cousin, as he did her  
 sister,

And I should be debarred from all access.

Then as to what she suffers from her father,

In all this there is much exaggeration :  
Old men are testy, and will have their way ;

A man may stab his enemy, or his vassal,

And live a free life as to wine or women,

And with a peevish temper may return

To a dull home, and rate his wife and children ;

Daughters and wives call this foul tyranny.

I shall be well content, if on my conscience

There rest no heavier sin than what they suffer

From the devices of my love—A net  
From which she shall escape not. Yet I fear

Her subtle mind, her awe-inspiring gaze,

Whose beams anatomise me, nerve by nerve,

And lay me bare, and make me blush to see

My hidden thoughts.—Ah, no ! a friendless girl

Who clings to me, as to her only hope :—

I were a fool, not less than if a panther  
Were panic-stricken by the antelope's eye,

If she escape me. [Exit.

SCENE III.—*A magnificent Hall in the Cenci Palace.*

*A Banquet. Enter CENCI, LUCRETIA, BEATRICE, ORSINO, CAMILLO, NOBLES.*

*Cenci.* Welcome, my friends and kinsmen ; welcome ye,  
Princes and Cardinals, Pillars of the Church,

Whose presence honours our festivity.  
I have too long lived like an anchorite,  
And, in my absence from your merry meetings,

An evil word is gone abroad of me ;  
But I do hope that you, my noble friends,

When you have shared the entertainment here,

And heard the pious cause for which 'tis given,

And we have pledged a health or two together,

Will think me flesh and blood as well as you ;

Sinful indeed, for Adam made all so,  
But tender-hearted, meek and pitiful.

*First Guest.* In truth, my lord, you seem too light of heart,

Too sprightly and companionable a man,

To act the deeds that rumour pins on you. [To his companion.

I never saw such blithe and open cheer

In any eye !

*Second Guest.* Some most desired event,

In which we all demand a common joy,  
Has brought us hither ; let us hear it, Count.

*Cenci.* It is indeed a most desired event.

If, when a parent, from a parent's heart,

Lifts from this earth to the great Father of all

A prayer, both when he lays him down to sleep,

And when he rises up from dreaming it ;

One supplication, one desire, one hope,

That he would grant a wish for his two sons,

Even all that he demands in their regard—

And suddenly, beyond his dearest hope,

It is accomplished, he should then rejoice,

And call his friends and kinsmen to a feast,

And task their love to grace his merriment,

Then honour me thus far—for I am he.

*Beatrice (to LUCRETIA).* Great God ! how horrible ! Some dreadful ill

Must have befallen my brothers.

*Lucretia.* Fear not, child, He speaks too frankly.

*Beatrice.* Ah ! My blood runs cold.

I fear that wicked laughter round his eye,  
Which wrinkles up the skin even to the hair.

*Cenci.* Here are the letters brought from Salaman'a;

Beatrice, read them to your mother. God,

I thank thee! In one night didst thou perform,

By ways inscrutable, the thing I sought.

My disobedient and rebellious sons Are dead!—Why dead!—What means this change of cheer?

You hear me not, I tell you they are dead;

And they will need no food or raiment more:

The tapers that did light them the dark way

Are their last cost. The Pope, I think, will not

Expect I should maintain them in their coffins.

Rejoice with me—my heart is wondrous glad.

(*LUCRETIA sinks, half fainting; BEATRICE supports her.*)

*Beatrice.* It is not true!—Dear lady, pray look up.

Had it been true, there is a God in Heaven,

He would not live to boast of such a boon.

Unnatural man, thou knowest that it is false.

*Cenci.* Ay, as the word of God; whom here I call

To witness that I speak the sober truth:—

And whose most favouring providence was shown

Even in the manner of their deaths. For Rocco

Was kneeling at the mass, with sixteen others,

When the Church fell and crushed him to a mummy;

The rest escaped unhurt. Cristofano

Was stabbed in error by a jealous Whilst she he loved was sleeping with his rival;

All in the self-same hour of the same night;

Which shows that Heaven has special care of me.

I beg those friends who love me, that they mark

The day a feast upon their calendars. It was the twenty-seventh of December:

Ay, read the letters if you doubt my oath.

[*The assembly appears confused; several of the guests rise.*]

*First Guest.* O, horrible! I will depart.—

*Second Guest.* And I.—

*Third Guest.* No, stay! I do believe it is some jest; though, faith,!

'Tis mocking us somewhat too solemnly.

I think his son has married the Infanta!

Or found a mine of gold in El Dorado:

'Tis but to season some such news; stay, stay!

I see 'tis only raillery by his smile. *Cenci* (*filling a bowl of wine, and lifting it up*).

Oh, thou bright wine, whose purple splendour leaps

And bubbles gaily in this golden bowl Under the lamplight, as my spirits do,

To hear the death of my accursed sons!

Could I believe thou wert their mingled blood,

Then would I taste thee like a sacrament,

And pledge with thee the mighty Devil in Hell;

Who, if a father's curses, as men say, Climb with swift wings after their children's souls,

And drag them from the very throne of Heaven,

Now triumphs in my triumph!—But thou art

Superfluous; I have drunken deep of joy,

And I will taste no other wine to-night.

Here, Andrea! Bear the bowl around.

*A Guest* (*rising*). Thou wretch!

Will none among this noble company Check the abandoned villain?

*Camillo.* For God's sake,  
Let me dismiss the guests! You are  
insane,  
Some ill will come of this.

*Second Guest.* Seize, silence him!

*First Guest.* I will!

*Third Guest.* And I!

*Cenci* (addressing those who rise  
with a threatening gesture)

Who moves? Who speaks?

[Turning to the company.]

'Tis nothing,  
Enjoy yourselves.—Beware! for my  
revenge

Is as the sealed commission of a king,  
That kills, and none dare name the  
murderer.

[The Banquet is broken up; several  
of the Guests are departing.]

*Beatrice.* I do entreat you, go not,  
noble guests;

What although tyranny and impious  
hate

Stand sheltered by a father's hoary  
hair?

What if 'tis he who clothed us in these  
limbs

Who tortures them, and triumphs?

What, if we,

The desolate and the dead, were his  
own flesh,

His children and his wife, whom he is  
bound

To love and shelter? Shall we  
therefore find

No refuge in this merciless wide world?

Oh, think what deep wrongs must  
have blotted out

First love, then reverence in a child's  
prone mind,

Till it thus vanquish shame and fear!  
Oh, think!

I have borne much, and kissed the  
sacred hand

Which crushed us to the earth, and  
thought its stroke

Was perhaps some paternal chastise-  
ment!

Have excused much, doubted; and  
when no doubt

Remained, have sought by patience,  
love and tears,

To soften him; and when this could  
not be,

I have knelt down through the long  
sleepless nights,

And lifted up to God, the father of all,  
Passionate prayers: and when these  
were not heard,

I have still borne;—until I meet you  
here,

Princes and kinsmen, at this hideous  
feast

Given at my brothers' deaths. Two  
yet remain,

His wife remains and I, whom if ye  
save not,

Ye may soon share such merriment  
again

As fathers make over their children's  
graves.

Oh! Prince Colonna, thou art our  
near kinsman;

Cardinal, thou art the Pope's cham-  
berlain;

*Camillo*, thou art chief justiciary;  
Take us away!

*Cenci.* (He has been conversing with  
CAMILLO during the first part of  
BEATRICE'S speech; he hears the  
conclusion, and now advances.)

I hope my good friends here  
Will think of their own daughters—  
or perhaps

Of their own throats—before they  
lend an ear

To this wild girl.

*Beatrice* (not noticing the words of  
*Cenci*).

Dare no one look on me?

None answer? Can one tyrant over-  
bear

The sense of many best and wisest  
men?

Or is it that I sue not in some form  
Of scrupulous law, that ye deny my  
suit?

Oh, God! that I were buried with my  
brothers!

And that the flowers of this departed  
spring

Were fading on my grave! and that  
my father

Were celebrating now one feast for  
all!

*Camillo.* A bitter wish for one so  
young and gentle;

Can we do nothing?—

*Colonn.* Nothing that I see,

Count *Cenci* were a dangerous enemy:  
Yet I would second any one.

*A Cardinal.*

And I.

*Cenci.* Retire to your chamber,  
insolent girl!

*Beatrice.* Retire thou, impious man!

Ay, hide thyself

Where never eye can look upon thee  
more!

Wouldst thou have honour and  
obedience,

Who art a torturer? Father, never  
dream,

Though thou mayst overbear this  
company,

But ill must come of ill.—Frown not  
on me!

Haste, hide thyself, lest with aveng-  
ing looks

My brothers' ghosts should hunt thee  
from thy seat!

Cover thy face from every living eye,  
And start if thou but hear a human  
step:

Seek out some dark and silent corner,  
there, [God,

Bow thy white head before offended  
And we will kneel around, and ferv-  
ently

Pray that he pity both ourselves and  
thee.

*Cenci.* My friends, I do lament this  
insane girl

Has spoilt the mirth of our festivity.  
Good night, farewell; I will not make

you longer  
Spectators of our dull domestic  
quarrels.

Another time.—

[*Exeunt all but CENCI and  
BEATRICE.*

My brain is swimming round;  
Give me a bowl of wine!

(*To BEATRICE.*) Thou painted  
viper!

Beast that thou art! Fair and yet  
terrible!

I know a charm shall make thee meek  
and tame,

Now get thee from my sight!

[*Exit BEATRICE.*

Here, Andrea,  
Fill up this goblet with Greek wine.

I said

I would not drink this evening, but I  
must;

[*fail*  
For, strange to say, I feel my spirits  
With thinking what I have decreed to

do.

[*Drinking the wine,*

Be thou the resolution of quick youth  
Within my veins, and manhood's  
purpose stern,

And age's firm, cold, subtle villainy;  
As if thou wert indeed my children's  
blood

Which I did thirst to drink. The  
charm works well;

It must be done, it shall be done, I  
swear!

[*Exit.*

## ACT II

### SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Cenci Palace.*

*Enter LUCRETIA and BERNARDO.*

*Lucretia.* Weep not, my gentle boy;  
he struck but me,

Who have borne deeper wrongs. In  
truth, if he

Had killed me, he had done a kinder  
deed.

Oh, God Almighty, do thou look upon  
us,

We have no other friend but only  
thee!

Yet weep not; though I love you as  
my own,

I am not your true mother.

*Bernardo.* Oh, more, more

Than ever mother was to any child,  
That have you been to me! Had he  
not been

My father, do you think that I should  
weep?

*Lucretia.* Alas! poor boy, what else  
couldst thou have done!

*Enter BEATRICE.*

*Beatrice (in a hurried voice).* Did  
he pass this way? Have you  
seen him, brother?

Ah! no, that is his step upon the  
stairs;

'Tis nearer now; his hand is on the  
door;

Mother, if I to thee have ever been  
A duteous child, now save me! Thou,

great God,

Whose image upon earth a father is,  
Dost thou indeed abandon me? He

comes;

The door is opening now; I see his  
face;

He frowns on others, but he smiles on me,

Even as he did after the feast last night. *[Enter a Servant.]*

Almighty God, how merciful thou art ! 'Tis but Orsino's servant.—Well, what news ?

*Servant.* My master bids me say, the Holy Father

Has sent back your petition thus unopened. *[Giving a paper.]*

And he demands at what hour 'twere secure

To visit you again ?

*Lucretia.* At the Ave Mary. *[Exit Servant.]*

So, daughter, our last hope has failed ; ah me,

How pale you look ! you tremble, and you stand

Wrapped in some fixed and fearful meditation,

As if one thought were overstrong for you :

Your eyes have a chill glare ; oh, dearest child !

Are you gone mad ? If not, pray speak to me.

*Beatrice.* You see I am not mad ; I speak to you.

*Lucretia.* You talked of something that your father did

After that dreadful feast ? Could it be worse

Than when he smiled and cried, " My sons are dead ! "

And everyone looked in his neighbour's face

To see if others were as white as he ? At the first word he spoke I felt the blood

Rush to my heart, and fell into a trance ; *[wild ;*

And when it passed I sat all weak and Whilst you alone stood up, and with strong words

Check'd his unnatural pride ; and I could see

The devil was rebuked that lives in him.

Until this hour thus you have ever stood

Between us and your father's moody wrath

Like a protecting presence : your firm mind

Has been our only refuge and defence :

What can have thus subdued it ? What can now

Have given you that cold melancholy look,

Succeeding to your unaccustomed fear ?

*Beatrice.* What is it that you say ? I was just thinking

'Twere better not to struggle any more.

Men, like my father, have been dark and bloody,

Yet never—O ! before worse comes of it,

'Twere wise to die : it ends in that at last.

*Lucretia.* Oh, talk not so, dear child ! Tell me at once

What did your father do or say to you ?

He stayed not after that accursed feast

One moment in your chamber.—Speak to me.

*Bernardo.* Oh, sister, sister, prithee, speak to us !

*Beatrice* (*speaking very slowly with a forced calmness*). It was one word, mother, one little word ;

One look, one smile. *[Wildly.]*

Oh ! he has trampled me Under his feet, and made the blood

stream down My pallid cheeks. And he has given

us all Ditchwater, and the fever-stricken

flesh Of buffaloes, and bade us eat or

starve, And we have eaten. He has made

me look On my beloved Bernardo, when the

rust Of heavy chains has gangrened his

sweet limbs, And I have never yet despaired—but

now ! What would I say ?

*[Recovering herself.]* Ah ! no, 'tis nothing new.

The sufferings we all share have made me wild :

He only struck and cursed me as he passed ;



He said, he looked, he did,— nothing  
at all

Beyond his wont, yet it disordered me.  
Alas! I am forgetful of my duty,  
I should preserve my senses for your  
sake.

*Lucretia.* Nay, Beatrice; have  
courage, my sweet girl.

If any one despairs it should be I,  
Who loved him once, and now must  
live with him

Till God in pity call for him or me.  
For you may, like your sister, find  
some husband,

And smile, years hence, with children  
round your knees

Whilst I, then dead, and all this  
hideous coil,

Shall be remembered only as a dream.

*Beatrice.* Talk not to me, dear lady,  
of a husband.

Did you not nurse me when my  
mother died?

Did you not shield me and that dear-  
est boy?

And had we any other friend but you  
In infancy, with gentle words and  
looks,

To win our father not to murder us?  
And shall I now desert you? May  
the ghost

Of my dead mother plead against my  
soul,

If I abandon her who filled the place  
She left, with more even than a  
mother's love!

*Bernardo.* And I am of my sister's  
mind. Indeed

I would not leave you in this wretched-  
ness,

Even though the Pope should make  
me free to live

In some blithe place, like others of  
my age,

With sports, and delicate food, and  
the fresh air.

Oh, never think that I will leave you,  
mother!

*Lucretia.* My dear, dear children!

*Enter CENCI, suddenly.*

*Cenci.* What! Beatrice here?  
Come hither!

*She shrinks back, and covers her face.*

Nay, hide not your face, 'tis fair;

Look up! Why, yesternight you  
dared to look

With disobedient insolence upon me,  
Bending a stern and an inquiring  
brow

On what I meant; whilst I then  
sought to hide

That which I came to tell you—but  
in vain.

*Beatrice (wildly staggering towards  
the door).* Oh, that the earth  
would gape! Hide me, oh God!

*Cenci.* Then it was I whose inarticu-  
late words

Fell from my lips, who with tottering  
steps

Fled from your presence, as you now  
from mine.

Stay, I command you! From this  
day and hour

Never again, I think, with fearless eye,  
And brow superior, and unaltered

cheek,  
And that lip made for tenderness or

scorn,  
Shalt thou strike dumb the meanest  
of mankind:

Me least of all. Now get thee to thy  
chamber,

Thou too, loathed image of thy cursed  
mother,

Thy milky, meek face makes me sick  
with hate!

[*Exeunt BEATRICE and BERNARDO.*  
(*Aside.*) So much has passed between  
us as must make

Me bold, her fearful.—'Tis an awful  
thing

To touch such mischief as I now  
conceive:

So men sit shivering on the dewy  
bank

And try the chill stream with their  
feet; once in—

How the delighted spirit pants for joy!

*Lucretia (advancing timidly towards  
him).* Oh, husband! Pray for-  
give poor Beatrice,

She meant not any ill.

*Cenci.* Nor you perhaps?  
Nor that young imp, whom you have  
taught by rote

Parricide with his alphabet? Nor  
Giacomo?

Nor those two most unnatural sons,  
who stirred

Enmity up against me with the Pope?  
Whom in one night merciful God cut  
off :

Innocent lambs ! They thought not  
any ill.

You were not here conspiring ? you  
said nothing

Of how I might be dungeoned as a  
madman ;

Or be condemned to death for some  
offence,

And you would be the witnesses ?—  
This failing,

How just it were to hire assassins, or  
Put sudden poison in my evening  
drink ?

Or smother me when overcome by  
wine ?

Seeing we had no other judge but  
God,

And he had sentenced me, and there  
were none

But you to be the executioners  
Of his decree unregistered in heaven ?

Oh, no ! You said not this ?

*Lucretia.* So help me God,  
I never thought the things you charge  
me with !

*Cenci.* If you dare speak that  
wicked lie again,

I'll kill you. What ! it was not by  
your counsel

That Beatrice disturbed the feast last  
night ?

You did not hope to stir some enemies  
Against me, and escape, and laugh to  
scorn

What every nerve of you now trembles  
at ?

You judged that men were bolder  
than they are ;

Few dare to stand between their  
grave and me.

*Lucretia.* Look not so dreadfully !  
By my salvation

I knew not aught that Beatrice de-  
signed ;

Nor do I think she designed any thing  
Until she heard you talk of her dead  
brothers.

*Cenci.* Blaspheming liar ! You are  
damned for this !

But I will take you where you may  
persuade

The stones you tread on to deliver  
you :

For men shall there be none but those  
who dare

All things ; not question that which I  
command.

On Wednesday next I shall set out :  
you know

That savage rock, the Castle of  
Petrella ?

'Tis safely walled, and moated round  
about :

Its dungeons under ground, and its  
thick towers

Never told tales ; though they have  
heard and seen

What might make dumb things speak.  
Why do you linger ?

Make speediest preparation for the  
journey ! [*Exit* *LUCRETIA.*

The all-beholding sun yet shines ; I  
hear

A busy stir of men about the streets ;  
I see the bright sky through the win-  
dow panes :

It is a garish, broad, and peering  
day ;

Loud, light, suspicious, full of eyes  
and ears ;

And every little corner, nook, and  
hole,

Is penetrated with the insolent light.  
Come, darkness ! Yet, what is the

day to me ?

And wherefore should I wish for night,  
who do

A deed which shall confound both  
night and day ?

'Tis she shall grope through a be-  
wildering mist

Of horror : if there be a sun in heaven,  
She shall not dare to look upon its  
beams ;

Nor feel its warmth. Let her, then,  
wish for night ;

The act I think shall soon extinguish  
all

For me : I bear a darker, deadlier  
gloom

Than the earth's shade, or interlunar  
air.

Or constellations quenched in murki-  
est cloud,

In which I walk secure and unbeheld  
Towards my purpose.—Would that it  
were done !

[*Exit.*

SCENE II. *A Chamber in the Vatican.*

*Enter CAMILLO and GIACOMO, in conversation.*

*Camillo.* There is an obsolete and doubtful law,  
By which you might obtain a bare provision  
Of food and clothing.

*Giacomo.* Nothing more ? Alas !  
Bare must be the provision which strict law

Awards, and aged sullen avarice pays.  
Why did my father not apprentice me  
To some mechanic trade ? I should have then

Been trained in no high-born necessities

Which I could meet not by my daily toil.

The eldest son of a rich nobleman  
Is heir to all his incapacities ;  
He has wide wants, and narrow powers. If you,

Cardinal Camillo, were reduced at once

From thrice-driven beds of down, and delicate food,

An hundred servants, and six palaces,  
To that which nature doth indeed require ?—

*Camillo.* Nay, there is reason in your plea ; 'twere hard.

*Giacomo.* 'Tis hard for a firm man to bear : but I

Have a dear wife, a lady of high birth,  
Whose dowry in ill hour I lent my father,

Without a bond or witness to the deed ;  
And children, who inherit her fine senses,

The fairest creatures in this breathing world ;

And she and they reproach me not, Cardinal.

Do you not think the Pope would interpose

And stretch authority beyond the law ?

*Camillo.* Though your peculiar case is hard, I know

The Pope will not divert the course of law.

After that impious feast the other night

I spoke with him, and urged him then to check

Your father's cruel hand ; he frowned, and said,

" Children are disobedient, and they sting

Their fathers' hearts to madness and despair,

Requiting years of care with contumely.

I pity the Count Cenci from my heart ;  
His outraged love perhaps awakener

hate, And thus he is exasperated to ill.

In the great war between the old and young,

I, who have white hairs and a tottering body,

Will keep at least blameless neutrality." [Enter ORSINO.

You, my good lord Orsino, heard those words.

*Orsino.* What words ?

*Giacomo.* Alas, repeat them not again !

There then is no redress for me ; at least

None but that which I may achieve myself,

Since I am driven to the brink. But, say,

My innocent sister and my only brother

Are dying underneath my father's eye.

The memorable torturers of this land,  
Galeaz Visconti, Borgia, Ezzelin,

Never inflicted on their meanest slave  
What these endure ; shall they have

no protection ?

*Camillo.* Why, if they would petition to the Pope,

I see not how he could refuse it—yet  
He holds it of most dangerous example

In aught to weaken the paternal power,

Being, as 'twere, the shadow of his own.

I pray you now excuse me. I have business

That will not bear delay.

[Exit CAMILLO.  
*Giacomo.* But you, Orsino,

Have the petition ; wherefore not present it !

*Orsino.* I have presented it, and  
backed it with  
My earnest prayers, and urgent inter-  
est ;

It was returned unanswered. I doubt  
not

But that the strange and execrable  
deeds

Alleged in it—in truth they might  
well baffle

Any belief—have turned the Pope's  
displeasure

Upon the accusers from the criminal :  
So I should guess from what Camillo  
said.

*Giacomo.* My friend, that palace-  
walking devil, Gold,  
Has whispered silence to his Holiness ;  
And we are left, as scorpions ringed  
with fire.

What should we do but strike our-  
selves to death ?

For he who is our murderous perse-  
cutor

Is shielded by a father's holy name,  
Or I would— [*Stops abruptly.*]

*Orsino.* What ? Fear not to speak  
your thought.

Words are but holy as the deeds they  
cover :

A priest who has forsworn the God  
he serves ;

A judge who makes the truth weep at  
his decree ;

A friend who should weave counsel,  
as I now, [*guile ;*]

But as the mantle of some selfish  
A father who is all a tyrant seems,

Were the profaner for his sacred  
name.

*Giacomo.* Ask me not what I think ;  
the unwilling brain

Feigns often what it would not ; and  
we trust

Imagination with such phantasies  
As the tongue dares not fashion into  
words ;

Which have no words, their horror  
makes them dim

To the mind's eye. My heart denies  
itself

To think what you demand.

*Orsino.* But a friend's bosom  
Is as the inmost cave of our own mind,  
Where we sit shut from the wide gaze  
of day,

And from the all-communicating air.  
You look what I suspected—

*Giacomo.* Spare me now !  
I am as one lost in a midnight wood,

Who dares not ask some harmless  
passenger

The path across the wilderness, lest  
he,

As my thoughts are, should be—a  
murderer.

I know you are my friend, and all I  
dare

Speak to my soul that will I trust  
with thee.

But now my heart is heavy, and  
would take

Lone counsel from a night of sleepless  
care.

Pardon me, that I say farewell—fare-  
well !

I would that to my own suspected self  
I could address a word so full of peace.

*Orsino.* Farewell ! — Be your  
thoughts better or more bold.

I had disposed the Cardinal Camillo  
[*Exit GIACOMO.*]

To feed his hope with cold encourage-  
ment :

It fortunately serves my close designs  
That 'tis a trick of this same family

To analyse their own and other  
minds.

Such self-anatomy shall teach the will  
Dangerous secrets : for it tempts our

powers,  
Knowing what must be thought, and  
may be done,

Into the depth of darkest purposes :  
So Cenci fell into the pit ; even I,

Since Beatrice unveiled me to myself,  
And made me shrink from what I

cannot shun,  
Show a poor figure to my own esteem,

To which I grow half reconciled.  
I'll do

As little mischief as I can : that  
thought

Shall fee the accuser conscience.

[*After a pause.*]

Now what harm  
If Cenci should be murdered ? — yet, if

murdered,  
Wherefore by me ? And what if I

could take  
The profit, yet omit the sin and peril

In such an action? Of all earthly things  
 I fear a man whose blows outspeed his words;  
 And such is Cenci: and while Cenci lives  
 His daughter's dowry were a secret grave  
 If a priest wins her.—Oh, fair Beatrice!  
 Would that I loved thee not, or, loving thee,  
 Could but despise danger, and gold, and all  
 That frowns between my wish and its effect,  
 Or smiles beyond it! There is no escape:  
 Her bright form kneels beside me at the altar,  
 And follows me to the resort of men,  
 And fills my slumber with tumultuous dreams,  
 So when I wake my blood seems liquid fire;  
 And if I strike my damp and dizzy head,  
 My hot palm scorches it: her very name,  
 But spoken by a stranger, makes my heart  
 Sicken and pant; and thus unprofitably  
 I clasp the phantom of unfelt delights,  
 Till weak imagination half possesses  
 The self-created shadow. Yet much longer  
 Will I not nurse this life of feverous hours:  
 From the unravelled hopes of Giacommo  
 I must work out my own dear purposes.  
 I see, as from a tower, the end of all:  
 Her father dead; her brother bound to me  
 By a dark secret, surer than the grave;  
 Her mother scared and unexpostulating  
 From the dread manner of her wish achieved:  
 And she!—Once more take courage, my faint heart;  
 What dares a friendless maiden matched with thee?

I have such foresight as assures success;  
 Some unbeheld divinity doth ever,  
 When dread events are near, stir up men's minds  
 To black suggestions; and he prospers best,  
 Not who becomes the instrument of ill,  
 But who can flatter the dark spirit, that makes  
 Its empire and its prey of other hearts,  
 Till it become his slave—as I will do.  
 [Exit.]

## ACT III

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Cenci Palace.*

LUCRETIA; *to her enter* BEATRICE *(she enters staggering, and speaks wildly).*

*Beatrice.* Reach me that handkerchief!—My brain is hurt,  
 My eyes are full of blood; just wipe them for me—

I see but indistinctly.—

*Lucretia.* My sweet child,  
 You have no wound; 'tis only a cold dew

That starts from your dear brow.—  
 Alas! Alas!

What has befallen?

*Beatrice.* How comes this hair undone?

Its wandering strings must be what blind me so,

And yet I tied it fast.—O horrible!  
 The pavement sinks under my feet!  
 The walls

Spin round! I see a woman weeping there,

And standing calm and motionless, whilst I

Slide giddily as the world reels,—My God!

The beautiful blue heaven is flecked with blood!

The sunshine on the floor is black!  
 The air

Is changed to vapours such as the dead breathe

In charnel-pits! Pah! I am choked!  
 There creeps

A clinging, black, contaminating  
mist

About me—'tis substantial, heavy,  
thick ;

I cannot pluck it from me, for it glues  
My fingers and my limbs to one an-  
other,

And eats into my sinews, and dis-  
solves

My flesh to a pollution, poisoning  
The subtle, pure, and inmost spirit of  
life !

My God ! I never knew what the mad  
felt

Before ; for I am mad beyond all  
doubt ! *[More wildly.]*

No, I am dead ! These putrefying  
limbs

Shut round and sepulchre the pant-  
ing soul,

Which would burst forth into the  
wandering air ! *[A pause.]*

What hideous thought was that I  
had even now ?

'Tis gone ; and yet its burthen re-  
mains here

O'er these dull eyes—upon this weary  
heart !

O, world ! O life ! O, day ! O,  
misery !

*Lucretia.* What ails thee, my poor  
child ? She answers not.

Her spirit apprehends the sense of  
pain,

But not its cause ; suffering has dried  
away

The source from which it sprung.—

*Beatrice (frantically).* Like Par-  
ricide—

Misery has killed its father : yet its  
father

Never like mine—O, God ! What  
thing am I ?

*Lucretia.* My dearest child, what  
has your father done ?

*Beatrice (doubtfully).* Who art  
thou, questioner ? I have no  
father. *[Aside.]*

She is the madhouse nurse who tends  
on me,

It is a piteous office.

*[To LUCRETIA, in a slow, subdued  
voice.]*

Do you know,

I thought I was that wretched Bea-  
trice .

Men speak of, whom her father some-  
times haies

From hall to hall by the entangled  
hair ;

At others, pens up naked in damp  
cells

Where scaly reptiles crawl, and  
starves her there,

Till she will eat strange flesh. This  
woeful story

So did I overact in my sick dreams,  
That I imagined—no, it cannot be !

Horrible things have been in this wild  
world,

Prodigious mixtures, and confusions  
strange

Of good and ill ; and worse have been  
conceived

'Than ever there was found a heart to  
do.

But never fancy imaged such a deed  
As—

*[Pauses, suddenly recollecting herself.]*  
Who art thou ? Swear to  
me, ere I die

With fearful expectation, that indeed  
Thou art not what thou seemest—

Mother !

*Lucretia.* Oh ! My sweet child,  
know you—

*Beatrice.*

Yet speak it not :

For then if this be truth, that other  
too

Must be a truth, a firm enduring  
truth,

Linked with each lasting circum-  
stance of life,

Never to change, never to pass away.  
Why so it is. This is the Cenci

Palace ;

Thou art Lucretia ; I am Beatrice.  
I have talked some wild words, but

will no more.

Mother, come near me : from this  
point of time,

I am—

*[Her voice dies away faintly]*

*Lucretia.* Alas ! what has befallen  
thee, child ?

What has thy father done ?

*Beatrice.* What have I done ?

Am I not innocent ? Is it my crime  
That one with white hair, and imperi-  
ous brow,

Who tortured me from my forgotten  
years,

As parents only dare, should call himself

My father, yet should be !—Oh, what am I ?

What name, what place, what memory shall be mine ?

What retrospects, outliving even despair ?

*Lucretia.* He is a violent tyrant, surely, child :

We know that death alone can make us free ;

His death or ours. But what can he have done

Of deadlier outrage or worse injury ?

Thou art unlike thyself ; thine eyes shoot forth

A wandering and strange spirit. Speak to me,

Unlock those pallid hands whose fingers twine

With one another.

*Beatrice.* 'Tis the restless life Tortured within them. If I try to speak

I shall go mad. Ay, something must be done ;

What, yet I know not—something which shall make

The thing that I have suffered but a shadow [it ;

In the dread lightning which avenges

Brief, rapid, irreversible, destroying

The consequence of what it cannot cure.

Some such thing is to be endured or done :

When I know what, I shall be still and calm,

And never anything will move me more.

But now !—Oh blood, which art my father's blood,

Circling through these contaminated veins,

If thou, poured forth on the polluted earth,

Could wash away the crime, and punishment

By which I suffer—no, that cannot be !

Many might doubt there were a God above

Who sees and permits evil, and so die :

That faith no agony shall obscure in me.

*Lucretia.* It must indeed have been some bitter wrong,  
Yet what, I dare not guess Oh ! my lost child,

Hide not in proud impenetrable grief Thy sufferings from my fear.

*Beatrice.* I hide them not.  
What are the words which you would have me speak ?

I, who can feign no image in my mind Of that which has transformed me ?

I, whose thought

Is like a ghost shrouded and folded up In its own formless horror ? Of all words,

That minister to mortal intercourse, Which wouldst thou hear ? For

there is none to tell

My misery : if another ever knew

Aught like to it, she died as I will die,

And left it, as I must, without a name.

Death ! Death ! Our law and our religion call thee

A punishment and a reward. Oh, which

Have I deserved ?

*Lucretia.* The peace of innocence ; Till in your season you be called to heaven.

Whate'er you may have suffered, you have done

No evil. Death must be the punishment

Of crime, or the reward of trampling down

The thorns which God has strewed upon the path

Which leads to immortality.

*Beatrice.* Ay, death—

The punishment of crime. I pray thee, God,

Let me not be bewildered while I judge.

If I must live day after day, and keep These limbs, the unworthy temple of

thy spirit,

As a foul den from which what thou abhorrest

May mock thee, unavenged—it shall not be !

Self-murder—no that might be no escape,

For thy decree yawns like a Hell between

Our will and it.—Oh ! in this mortal world

There is no vindication and no law,  
Which can adjudge and execute the  
doom  
Of that through which I suffer.

*Enter ORSINO.*

*(She approaches him solemnly.)* Welcome, Friend!

I have to tell you that, since last we met,

I have endured a wrong so great and strange,

That neither life nor death can give me rest.

Ask me not what it is, for there are deeds

Which have no form, sufferings which have no tongue.

*Orsino.* And what is he who has thus injured you?

*Beatrice.* The man they call my father: a dread name.

*Orsino.* It cannot be—

*Beatrice.* What it can be, or not, Forbear to think. It is, and it has been;

Advise me how it shall not be again. I thought to die; but a religious awe Restrains me, and the dread lest death itself

Might be no refuge from the consciousness

Of what is yet unexpiated. Oh, speak!

*Orsino.* Accuse him of the deed, and let the law

Avenge thee.

*Beatrice.* Oh, ice-hearted counsellor!

If I could find a word that might make known

The crime of my destroyer; and that done,

My tongue should like a knife tear out the secret

Which cankers my heart's core; ay, lay all bare,

So that my unpolluted fame should be With vilest gossips a stale mouthed story;

A mock, a byword, an astonishment:—

If this were done, which never shall be done,

Think of the offender's gold, his dreaded hate,

And the strange horror of the accuser's tale,  
Baffling belief, and overpowering speech;

Scarce whispered, unimaginable-wrapt

In hideous hints—Oh, most assured redress!

*Orsino.* You will endure it then? *Beatrice.* Endure!—*Orsino.*

It seems your counsel is small profit. *[Turns from him, and speaks half to herself.]*

Ay,

All must be suddenly resolved and done.

What is this undistinguishable mist Of thoughts, which rise, like shadow

after shadow,  
Darkening each other?

*Orsino.* Should the offender live? Triumph in his misdeed? and make,

by use,  
His crime, whate'er it is, dreadful no

doubt,  
Thine element; until thou mayest

become  
Utterly lost; subdued even to the hue

Of that which thou permittest?

*Beatrice (to herself).* Mighty death!

Thou double-visaged shadow! Only judge!

Rightfullest arbiter!

*[She retires, absorbed in thought.]* *Lucretia.* If the lightning

Of God has e'er descended to avenge—

*Orsino.* Blaspheme not! His high providence commits

Its glory on this earth, and their own wrongs *[gleet]*

Into the hands of men; if they ne- To punish crime—

*Lucretia.* But if one, like this wretch,

Should mock, with gold, opinion, law, and power?

If there be no appeal to that which makes

The guiltiest tremble! If, because our wrongs,

For that they are unnatural, strange, and monstrous,

Exceed all measure of belief? Oh, God!



If, for the very reasons which should make

Redress most swift and sure, our injurer triumphs ?

And we, the victims, bear worse punishment

Than that appointed for their torturer ?

*Orsino.* Think not

But that there is redress where there is wrong,

So we be bold enough to seize it.

*Lucretia.* How ?

If there were any way to make all sure,

[good

I know not—but I think it might be To—

*Orsino.* Why, his late outrage to Beatrice ;

For it is such, as I but faintly guess, As makes remorse dishonour, and leaves her

Only one duty, how she may avenge : You, but one refuge from ills ill endured ;

Me, but one counsel—

*Lucretia.* For we cannot hope That aid, or retribution, or resource Will arise thence, where every other one

Might find them with less need.

[*BEATRICE advances.*

*Orsino.* Then—

*Beatrice.* Peace, Orsino !

And, honoured Lady, while I speak, I pray,

That you put off, as garments overworn,

Forbearance and respect, remorse and fear,

And all the fit restraints of daily life, Which have been borne from childhood, but which now

Would be a mockery to my holier plea.

As I have said, I have endured a wrong,

Which, though it be expressionless, is such

As asks atonement, both for what is past,

And lest I be reserved, day after day, To load with crimes an overburthened soul,

And be—what ye can dream not. I have prayed

To God, and I have talked with my own heart,

And have unravelled my entangled will,

And have at length determined what is right.

Art thou my friend, Orsino ? False or true ?

Pledge thy salvation ere I speak.

*Orsino.* I swear

To dedicate my cunning, and my strength,

My silence, and whatever else is mine, To thy commands, [vise

*Lucretia.* You think we should de- His death ?

*Beatrice.* And execute what is devised,

And suddenly. We must be brief and bold.

*Orsino.* And yet most cautious.

*Lucretia.* For the jealous laws Would punish us with death and infamy

For that which it became themselves to do.

*Beatrice.* Be cautious as ye may, but prompt. Orsino,

What are the means ?

*Orsino.* I know two dull, fierce outlaws,

Who think man's spirit as a worm's, and they

Would trample out, for any slight caprice,

The meanest or the noblest life. This mood

Is marketable here in Rome. They sell

What we now want.

*Lucretia.* To-morrow, before dawn,

Cenci will take us to that lonely rock, Petrella, in the Apulian Apennines.

If he arrive there—

*Beatrice.* He must not arrive.

*Orsino.* Will it be dark before you reach the tower ?

*Lucretia.* The sun will scarce be set.

*Beatrice.* But I remember Two miles on this side of the fort, the road

Crosses a deep ravine ; 'tis rough and narrow,

And winds with short turns down the precipice ;

And in its depth there is a mighty  
rock,  
Which has, from unimaginable years,  
Sustained itself with terror and with  
toil

Over a gulf, and with the agony  
With which it clings seems slowly  
coming down ;  
Even as a wretched soul hour after  
hour

Clings to the mass of life ; yet, cling-  
ing, leans ;  
And, leaning, makes more dark the  
dread abyss

In which it fears to fall : beneath  
this crag

Huge as despair, as if in weariness,  
The melancholy mountain yawns—  
below,

You hear but see not an impetuous  
torrent

Raging among the caverns, and a  
bridge

Crosses the chasm ; and high above  
there grow,

With intersecting trunks, from crag to  
crag,

Cedars, and yews, and pines ; whose  
tangled hair

Is matted in one solid roof of shade  
By the dark ivy's twine. At noon-day  
here

'Tis twilight, and at sunset blackest  
night.

*Orsino.* Before you reach that  
bridge make some excuse

For spurring on your mules, or loiter-  
ing

Until—

*Beatrice.* What sound is that ?

*Lucretia.* Hark ! No, it cannot be  
a servant's step ;

It must be Cenci, unexpectedly  
Returned—Make some excuse for be-  
ing here

*Beatrice* (to *ORSINO* as she goes out).  
That step we hear approach must  
never pass

The bridge of which we spoke.

[*Exeunt* *LUCRETIA* and *BEATRICE*.]

*Orsino.* What shall I do ?  
Cenci must find me here, and I must  
bear

The imperious inquisition of his looks  
As to what brought me hither : let me  
mask

Mine own in some inane and vacant  
smile.

*Enter* *GIACOMO*, in a hurried manner.

How ! Have you ventured thither ?  
know you then

That Cenci is from home ?

*Giacomo.* I sought him here ;  
And now must wait till he returns.

*Orsino.* Great God !  
Weigh you the danger of this rash-  
ness ?

*Giacomo.* Ay !  
Does my destroyer know his danger ?

We  
Are now no more, as once, parent and  
child,

But man to man ; the oppressor to the  
oppressed ;

The slanderer to the slandered ; foe to  
foe.

He has cast Nature off, which was his  
shield,

And Nature casts him off, who is her  
shame ;

And I spurn both. Is it a father's  
throat

Which I will shake ? and say, I ask  
not gold ;

I ask not happy years ; nor memories  
Of tranquil childhood ; nor home-  
sheltered love ;

Though all these hast thou torn from  
me, and more, [hoard

But only my fair fame ; only one  
Of peace, which I thought hidden  
from thy hate,

Under the penury heaped on me by  
thee ;

Or I will—God can understand and  
pardon,

Why should I speak with man ?

*Orsino.* Be calm, dear friend.

*Giacomo.* Well, I will calmly tell  
you what he did.

This old Francesco Cenci, as you  
know,

Borrowed the dowry of my wife from  
me,

And then denied the loan ; and left  
me so

In poverty, the which I sought to  
mend .

By holding a poor office in the state.  
It had been promised to me, and al-  
ready

I bought new clothing for my ragged babes,  
 And my wife smiled ; and my heart  
 knew repose ;  
 When Cenci's intercession, as I  
 found,  
 Conferred this office on a wretch,  
 whom thus  
 He paid for vilest service. I re-  
 turned  
 With this ill news, and we sate sad to-  
 gether  
 Solacing our despondency with tears  
 Of such affection and unbroken faith  
 As temper life's worst bitterness ;  
 when he,  
 As he is wont, came to upbraid and  
 curse,  
 Mocking our poverty, and telling us  
 Such was God's scourge for disobedi-  
 ent sons.  
 And then, that I might strike him  
 dumb with shame,  
 I spoke of my wife's dowry ; but he  
 coined  
 A brief yet specious tale, how I had  
 wasted  
 The sum in secret riot ; and he saw  
 My wife was touched, and he went  
 smiling forth.  
 And when I knew the impression he  
 had made,  
 And felt my wife insult with silent  
 scorn  
 My ardent truth, and look averse and  
 cold,  
 I went forth too ; but soon returned  
 again ;  
 Yet not so soon but that my wife had  
 taught  
 My children her harsh thoughts, and  
 they all cried,  
 " Give us clothes, father ! Give us  
 better food !  
 What you in one night squander were  
 enough  
 For months ! " I looked and saw  
 that home was hell.  
 And to that hell will I return no more,  
 Until mine enemy has rendered up  
 Atonement, or, as he gave life to me,  
 I will, reversing nature's law—  
*Orsino.* Trust me,  
 The compensation which thou seekest  
 here  
 Will be denied.

*Giacomo.* Then—Are you not my  
 friend ?  
 Did you not hint at the alternative,  
 Upon the brink of which you see I  
 stand,  
 The other day when we conversed to-  
 gether ? [parricide,  
 My wrongs were then less. That word  
 Although I am resolved, haunts me  
 like fear.  
*Orsino.* It must be fear itself, for  
 the bare word  
 Is hollow mockery. Mark, how wis-  
 est God  
 Draws to one point the threads of a  
 just doom,  
 So sanctifying it : what you devise  
 Is, as it were, accomplished.  
*Giacomo.* Is he dead ?  
*Orsino.* His grave is ready. Know  
 that since we met.  
 Cenci has done an outrage to his  
 daughter.  
*Giacomo.* What outrage ?  
*Orsino.* That she speaks not,  
 but you may  
 Conceive such half conjectures as I do,  
 From her fixed paleness, and the lofty  
 grief  
 Of her stern brow, bent on the idle air,  
 And her severe unmodulated voice,  
 Drowning both tenderness and dread ;  
 and last  
 From this ; that whilst her step-  
 mother and I,  
 Bewildered in our horror, talk to-  
 gether  
 With obscure hints ; both self-mis-  
 understood,  
 And darkly guessing, stumbling, in  
 our talk,  
 Over the truth, and yet to its re-  
 venge,  
 She interrupted us, and with a look  
 Which told, before she spoke it, he  
 must die—  
*Giacomo.* It is enough. My doubts  
 are well appeased ;  
 There is a higher reason for the act  
 Than mine ; there is a holier judge  
 than me,  
 A more unblamed avenger. Beatrice,  
 Who in the gentleness of thy sweet  
 youth  
 Hast never trodden on a worm, or  
 bruised

A living flower, but thou hast pitied it  
 With needless tears! Fair sister,  
 thou in whom  
 Men wondered how such loveliness  
 and wisdom  
 Did not destroy each other! Is there  
 made  
 Ravage of thee? O, heart, I ask no  
 more  
 Justification! Shall I wait, Orsino,  
 Till he return, and stab him at the  
 door?  
*Orsino.* Not so; some accident  
 might interpose  
 To rescue him from what is now most  
 sure;  
 And you are unprovided where to fly,  
 How to excuse or to conceal. Nay,  
 listen:  
 All is contrived; success is so assured  
 That—

*Enter BEATRICE.*

*Beatrice.* 'Tis my brother's voice!  
 You know me not?

*Giacomo.* My sister, my lost sister!  
*Beatrice.* Lost indeed!

I see Orsino has talked with you, and  
 That you conjecture things too hor-  
 rible

To speak, yet far less than the truth.

Now, stay not,  
 He might return: yet kiss me; I  
 shall know

That then thou hast consented to his  
 death.

Farewell, farewell! Let piety to God,  
 Brotherly love, justice and clemency,  
 And all things that make tender hard-  
 est hearts,

Make thine hard, brother. Answer  
 not—farewell.

*[Exeunt severally.]*

SCENE II.—*A mean Apartment in  
 GIACOMO'S House.*

*GIACOMO alone.*

*Giacomo.* 'Tis midnight, and Or-  
 sino comes not yet.

*[Thunder, and the sound of a storm.]*  
 What! can the everlasting elements  
 Feel with a worm like man? If so,  
 the shaft

Of mercy-winged lightning would not  
 fall

On stones and trees. My wife, and  
 children sleep:

They are now living in unmeaning  
 dreams:

But I must wake, still doubting if  
 that deed

Be just which was most necessary. O,  
 Thou un replenished lamp! whose  
 narrow fire

Is shaken by the wind, and on whose  
 edge

Devouring darkness hovers! Thou  
 small flame,

Which, as a dying pulse rises and falls,  
 Still flickerest up and down, how  
 very soon,

Did I not feed thee, wouldst thou fail  
 and be

As thou hadst never been! So wastes  
 and sinks

Even now, perhaps, the life that kind-  
 led mine:

But that no power can fill with vital  
 oil

That broken lamp of flesh. Ha! 'tis  
 the blood

Which fed these veins that ebbs till all  
 is cold: *[sinks]*

It is the form that moulded mine, that  
 Into the white and yellow spasms of  
 death:

It is the soul by which mine was ar-  
 rayed

In God's immortal likeness which now  
 stands

Naked before Heaven's judgment-  
 seat! *[A bell strikes.]*

One! Two!  
 The hours crawl on; and when my  
 hairs are white

My son will then perhaps be waiting  
 thus,

Tortured between just hate and vain  
 remorse;

Chiding the tardy messenger of news  
 Like those which I expect. I almost  
 wish

He be not dead, although my wrongs  
 are great;

Yet—'tis Orsino's step.

*[Enter ORSINO.]*  
 Speak!

*Orsino.* I am come  
 To say he has escaped.

*Giacomo.* Escaped!  
*Orsino.* And safe

Within Petrella. He passed by the spot

Appointed for the deed an hour too soon.

*Giacomo.* Are we the fools of such contingencies ?

And do we waste in blind misgivings thus

The hours when we should act ? Then wind and thunder,

Which seemed to howl his knell, is the loud laughter

With which Heaven mocks our weakness ! I henceforth

Will ne'er repent of aught designed or done,

But my repentance.

*Orsino.* See, the lamp is out.

*Giacomo.* If no remorse is ours when the dim air

Has drank this innocent flame, why should we quail

When Cenci's life, that light by which ill spirits

See the worst deeds they prompt, shall sink for ever ?

No, I am hardened.

*Orsino.* Why, what need of this

Who feared the pale intrusion of remorse

In a just deed ? Although our first plan failed,

Doubt not but he will soon be laid to rest.

But light the lamp ; let us not talk i' the dark.

*Giacomo* (*lighting the lamp.*) And yet, once quenched, I cannot thus relume

My father's life : do you not think his ghost

Might plead that argument with God ?

*Orsino.* Once gone,

You cannot now recall your sister's peace ;

Your own extinguished years of youth and hope ;

Nor your wife's bitter words ; nor all the taunts

Which, from the prosperous, weak misfortune takes ;

Nor your dead mother ; nor—

*Giacomo.* O speak no more !

I am resolved, although this very hand

Must quench the life that animated it.

*Orsino.* There is no need of that.

Listen : you know

Olimpio, the castellan of Petrella

In old Colonna's time ; him whom your father

Degraded from his post ? And Marzio,

That desperate wretch, whom he deprived last year .

Of a reward of blood, well earned and due ?

*Giacomo.* I knew Olimpio ; and they say he hated

Old Cenci so, that in his silent rage His lips grew white only to see him

pass.

Of Marzio I know nothing.

*Orsino.* Marzio's hate

Matches Olimpio's. I have sent these men,

But in your name, and as at your request,

To talk with Beatrice and Lucretia.

*Giacomo.* Only to talk ?

*Orsino.* The moments which even now

Pass onward to to-morrow's midnight hour,

May memorise their flight with death ; ere then

They must have talked, and may perhaps have done,

And made an end.

*Giacomo.* Listen ! What sound is that ?

*Orsino.* The house-dog moans, and the beams crack : nought else.

*Giacomo.* It is my wife complaining in her sleep :

I doubt not she is saying bitter things Of me ; and all my children round her

dreaming That I deny them sustenance.

*Orsino.* Whilst he Who truly took it from them, and

who fills Their hungry rest with bitterness, now

sleeps Lapped in bad pleasures, and triumphantly

Mocks thee in visions of successful hate

Too like the truth of day.

*Giacomo.* If e'er he wakes

Again, I will not trust to hireling hands—

*Orsino.* Why, that were well. I must be gone; good night!

When next we meet may all be done!

*Giacomo.* And all Forgotten: Oh, that I had never been!  
[*Exeunt*]

ACT IV

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Castle of Petrella. Enter CENCI.*

*Cenci.* She comes not; yet I left her even now

Vanquished and faint. She knows the penalty

Of her delay; yet what if threats are vain?

Am I not now within Petrella's moat? Or fear I still the eyes and ears of Rome?

Might I not drag her by the golden hair?

Stamp on her? Keep her sleepless, till her brain

Be overworn? Tame her with chains and famine?

Less would suffice. Yet so to leave undone

What I most seek! No, 'tis her stubborn will,

Which, by its own consent, shall stoop as low

As that which drags it down.  
[*Enter LUCRETIA.*]

Thou loathed wretch! Hide thee from my abhorrence; fly, begone!

Yet stay! Bid Beatrice come hither.

*Lucretia.* Oh, Husband! I pray, for thine own wretched sake,

Heed what thou dost. A man who walks like thee

Through crimes, and through the danger of his crimes,

Each hour may stumble o'er a sudden grave.

And thou art old; thy hairs are hoary grey;

As thou wouldst save thyself from death and hell,

Pity thy daughter; give her to some friend

In marriage; so that she may tempt thee not,

To hatred, or worse thoughts, if worse there be.

*Cenci.* What! like her sister, who has found a home

To mock my hate from with prosperity?

Strange ruin shall destroy both her and thee,

And all that yet remain. My death may be

Rapid, her destiny outspeeds it. Go, Bid her come hither, and before my mood

Be changed, lest I should drag her by the hair.

*Lucretia.* She sent me to thee, husband. At thy presence

She fell, as thou dost know, into a trance;

And in that trance she heard a voice which said,

"Cenci must die! Let him confess himself!

Even now the accusing angel waits to hear

If God, to punish his enormous crimes, Harden his dying heart!"

*Cenci.* Why—such things are; No doubt divine revealings may be made

'Tis plain I have been favoured from above,

For when I cursed my sons, they died.

—Ay—so— As to the right or wrong, that's talk—repentance—

Repentance is an easy moment's work,

And more depends on God than me. Well—well—!

I must give up the greater point, which was

To poison and corrupt her soul.

[*A pause: LUCRETIA approaches anxiously, and then shrinks back as he speaks.*]

One, two; Ay—Rocco and Cristofano my curse

Strangled: and Giacomo, I think, will find

Life a worse Hell than that beyond the grave:

Beatrice shall, if there be skill in hate,  
 Die in despair, blaspheming; to  
     Bernardo,  
 He is so innocent, I will bequeath  
 The memory of these deeds, and make  
     his youth  
 The sepulchre of hope, where evil  
 thoughts  
 Shall grow like weeds on a neglected  
 tomb.  
 When all is done, out in the wide  
     Campagna,  
 I will pile up my silver and my gold;  
 My costly robes, paintings, and tapes-  
     tries;  
 My parchments, and all records of my  
 wealth;  
 And make a bonfire in my joy, and  
     leave  
 Of my possessions nothing but my  
     name;  
 Which shall be an inheritance to strip  
 Its wearer bare as infamy. That done,  
 My soul, which is a scourge, will I re-  
     sign  
 Into the hands of him who wielded it;  
 Be it for its own punishment or theirs,  
 He will not ask it of me till the lash  
 Be broken in its last and deepest  
     wound;  
 Until its hate be all inflicted. Yet,  
 Lest death outspeed my purpose, let  
     me make  
 Short work and sure.

[*Going.*

*Lucretia (stops him).* Oh, stay!

It was a feint:

She had no vision, and she heard no  
 voice.

I said it but to awe thee.

*Cenci.* That is well.

Vile palterer with the sacred truth of  
 God,

Be thy soul choked with that blas-  
 pheming lie!

For Beatrice, worse terrors are in  
 store,  
 To bend her to my will.

*Lucretia.* Oh! to what will?

What cruel sufferings, more than she  
 has known,  
 Canst thou inflict?

*Cenci.* Andrea! go, call my  
 daughter,

And if she comes not, tell her that I  
 come.

What sufferings? I will drag her,  
 step by step,

Through infamies unheard of among  
 men;

She shall stand shelterless in the broad  
 noon

Of public scorn, for acts blazoned  
 abroad,

One among which shall be—What?  
 Canst thou guess?

She shall become (for what she most  
 abhors

Shall have a fascination to entrap  
 Her loathing will,) to her own con-  
 scious self

All she appears to others; and when  
 dead,

As she shall die unshrived and unfor-  
 given,

A rebel to her father and her God,  
 Her corpse shall be abandoned to the  
 hounds;

Her name shall be the terror of the  
 earth;

Her spirit shall approach the throne  
 of God

Plague-spotted with my curses. I  
 will make

Body and soul a monstrous lump of  
 ruin.

*Enter ANDREA.*

*Andrea.* The lady Beatrice—

*Cenci.* Speak, pale slave! What  
 Said she?

*Andrea.* My lord, 'twas what she  
 looked; she said:

"Go tell my father that I see the gulf  
 Of Hell between us two, which he may  
 pass;

I will not." [*Exit ANDREA.*

*Cenci.* Go thou quick, Lucretia,  
 Tell her to come; yet let her under-  
 stand

Her coming is consent: and say,  
 moreover,

That if she come not I will curse her.  
 [*Exit LUCRETIA.*

Ha!

With what but with a father's curse  
 doth God

Panic-strike armed victory, and make  
 pale

Cities in their prosperity? The  
 world's Father

Must grant a parent's prayer against  
his child,

Be he who asks even what men call me.  
Will not the deaths of her rebellious  
brothers

Awe her before I speak? For I on  
them

Did imprecate quick ruin, and it  
came. [Enter LUCRETIA.

Well; what? 'Speak, wretch!

*Lucretia.* She said, "I cannot  
come;

Go tell my father that I see a torrent  
Of his own blood raging between us."

*Cenci* (*kneeling*) God!

Hear me! If this most specious mass  
of flesh,

Which thou hast made my daughter;  
this my blood,

This particle of my divided being;  
Or rather, this my bane and my dis-  
ease,

Whose sight infects and poisons me;  
this devil,

Which sprung from me as from a hell,  
was meant

To aught good use; if her bright  
loveliness

Was kindled to illumine this dark  
world;

If nursed by thy selectest dew of love,  
Such virtues blossom in her as should  
make

The peace of life, I pray thee for my  
sake,

As thou the common God and Father  
art

Of her, and me, and all; reverse that  
doom!

Earth, in the name of God, let her  
food be

Poison, until she be encrusted round  
With leprous stains! Heaven, rain  
upon her head

The blistering drops of the Maremma's  
dew,

Till she be speckled like a toad; parch  
up

Those love-enkindled lips, warp those  
fine limbs

To loathed lameness! All-beholding  
sun,

Strike in thine envy those life-darting  
eyes

With thine own blinding beams!  
*Lucretia.* Peace! peace!

For thine own sake unsay those dread-  
ful words.

When high God grants, he punishes  
such prayers.

*Cenci* (*leaping up, and throwing  
his right hand towards Heaven*).

He does his will, I mine! This  
in addition,

That if she have a child——

*Lucretia.* Horrible thought!

*Cenci.* That if she ever have a  
child; and thou,

Quick Nature! I adjure thee by thy  
God,

That thou be fruitful in her, and in-  
crease

And multiply, fulfilling his command,  
And my deep imprecation! May it  
be

A hideous likeness of herself; that as  
From a distorting mirror, she may see

Her image mixed with what she most  
abhors,

Smiling upon her from her nursing  
breast.

And that the child may from its in-  
fancy

Grow, day by day, more wicked and  
deformed,

Turning her mother's love to misery;  
And that both she and it may live,

until  
It shall repay her care and pain with  
hate,

Of what may else be more unnatural.  
So he may hunt her through the

clamorous scoffs  
Of the loud world to a dishonoured

grave.  
Shall I revoke this curse? Go, bid

her come.  
Before my words are chronicled in

heaven. [Exit LUCRETIA.

I do not feel as if I were a man,  
But like a fiend appointed to chastise

The offences of some unremembered  
world.

My blood is running up and down my  
veins!

A fearful pleasure makes it prick and  
tingle:

I feel a giddy sickness of strange awe;  
My heart is beating with an expect-

ation  
Of horrid joy. [Enter LUCRETIA.

What? Speak!



*Lucretia.* She bids thee curse ;  
And if thy curses, as they cannot do,  
Could kill her soul—

*Cenci.* She would not come. 'Tis  
well,  
I can do both ; first take what I demand,  
And then extort concession. To thy  
chamber !  
Fly ere I spurn thee : and beware  
this night

That thou cross not my footsteps. It  
were safer

To come between the tiger and his  
prey. [*Exit LUCRETIA.*]

It must be late ; mine eyes grow  
weary dim

With unaccustomed heaviness of  
sleep.

Conscience ! Oh, thou most insolent  
of lies !

They say that sleep, that healing dew  
of heaven,

Steeps not in balm the foldings of the  
brain

Which thinks thee an impostor. I  
will go, [*rest,*

First to belie thee with an hour of  
Which will be deep and calm, I feel ;  
and then—

O, multitudinous Hell, the fiends will  
shake

Thine arches with the laughter of their  
joy !

There shall be lamentation heard in  
Heaven

As o'er an angel fallen ; and upon  
Earth

All good shall droop and sicken, and  
ill things

Shall, with a spirit of unnatural life,  
Stir and be quickened—even as I am  
now. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*Before the Castle of  
Petrclla.*

*Enter BEATRICE and LUCRETIA, above  
on the ramparts.*

*Beatrice.* They come not yet.

*Lucretia.* 'Tis scarce midnight.

*Beatrice.* How slow

Behind the course of thought, even  
sick with speed,  
Lags leaden-footed Time !

*Lucretia.* The minutes pass—

If he should wake before the deed is  
done ?

*Beatrice.* O, Mother ! He must  
never wake again.

What thou hast said persuades me  
that our act

Will but dislodge a spirit of deep hell  
Out of a human form.

*Lucretia.* 'Tis true he spoke  
Of death and judgment with strange  
confidence

For one so wicked ; as a man believ-  
ing

In God, yet recking not of good or ill.  
And yet to die without confession !—

*Beatrice.* Oh  
Believe that Heaven is merciful and  
just,

And will not add our dread necessity  
To the amount of his offences.

[*Enter OLIMPPIO and MARZIO, below.*]  
*Lucretia.* See,  
They come.

*Beatrice.* All mortal things must  
hasten thus

To their dark end. Let us go down.  
[*Exit LUCRETIA and BEATRICE*

*from above.*  
*Olimpio.* How feel you to this  
work ?

*Marzio.* As one who thinks  
A thousand crowns excellent market  
price

For an old murderer's life. Your  
cheeks are pale.

*Olimpio.* It is the white reflection  
of your own,

Which you call pale.  
*Marzio.* Is that their natural hue ?

*Olimpio.* Or 'tis my hate, and the  
deferred desire

To wreak it, which extinguishes their  
blood.

*Marzio.* You are inclined then to  
this business ?

*Olimpio.* Ay,  
If one should bribe me with a thou-  
sand crowns

To kill a serpent which had stung my  
child,

I could not be more willing.

[*Enter BEATRICE and LUCRETIA*  
*below.*

*Beatrice.* Are ye resolved ?  
*Olimpio.* Noble ladies !  
Is he asleep ?

*Marzio.* Is all  
Quiet ?

*Lucretia.* I mixed an opiate with  
his drink :

He sleeps so soundly—

*Beatrice.* That his death will be  
But as a change of sin-chastising  
dreams,

A dark continuance of the Hell within  
him,

Which God extinguish ! But ye are  
resolved ?

Ye know it is a high and holy deed ?

*Olimpio.* We are resolved.

*Marzio.* As to the how this act  
Be warranted, it rests with you.

*Beatrice.* Well, follow !

*Olimpio.* Hush ! Hark ! What noise  
is that ?

*Marzio.* Ha ! someone comes !

*Beatrice.* Ye conscience-stricken  
cravens, rock to rest  
Your baby hearts. It is the iron gate,  
Which ye left open, swinging to the  
wind,

That enters whistling as in scorn.  
Come, follow !

And be your steps like mine, light,  
quick, and bold. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*An Apartment in the  
Castle.*

*Enter BEATRICE and LUCRETIA.*

*Lucretia.* They are about it now.

*Beatrice.* Nay, it is done.

*Lucretia.* I have not heard him  
groan.

*Beatrice.* He will not groan.

*Lucretia.* What sound is that ?

*Beatrice.* List ! 'tis the tread of  
feet  
About his bed.

*Lucretia.* My God !  
If he be now, a cold stiff corpse—

*Beatrice.* O, fear not  
What may be done, but what is left  
undone :

The act seals all.

[*Enter OLIMPIO and MARZIO.*]

Is it accomplished ?

*Marzio.* What ?

*Olimpio.* Did you not call ?

*Beatrice.* When ?

*Olimpio.* Now,

*Beatrice.* I ask if all is over ?

*Olimpio.* We dare not kill an old  
and sleeping man ;

His thin grey hair, his stern and  
reverent brow,

His veined hands crossed on his heav-  
ing breast,

And the calm innocent sleep in which  
he lay,

Quelled me. Indeed, indeed, I can-  
not do it.

*Marzio.* But I was bolder ; for I  
chid Olimpio,

And bade him bear his wrongs to his  
own grave,

And leave me the reward. And now  
my knife

Touched the loose wrinkled throat,  
when the old man

Stirred in his sleep, and said, " God !  
hear, O hear,

A father's curse ! What, art thou not  
our father ? "

And then he laughed. I knew it was  
the ghost

Of my dead father speaking through  
his lips,

And could not kill him.

*Beatrice.* Miserable slaves !

Where, if ye dare not kill a sleeping  
man,

Found ye the boldness to return to me  
With such a deed undone ? Base

palterers !

Cowards and traitors ! Why, the  
very conscience

Which ye would sell for gold and for  
revenge

Is an equivocation : it sleeps over  
A thousand daily acts disgracing

men ;

And when a deed, where mercy insults  
Heaven—

Why do I talk ?

[*Snatching a dagger from one of  
them, and raising it.*]

Hadst thou a tongue to say,  
She murdered her own father, I must

do it !

But never dream ye shall outlive him  
long !

*Olimpio.* Stop, for God's sake !

*Marzio.* 'I will go back and kill  
him.

*Olimpio.* Give me the weapon, we  
must do thy will,

*Beatrice.* Take it ! Depart ! Return !

[*Exeunt OLIMPIO and MARZIO.*

How pale thou art !

We do but that which 'twere a deadly crime

To leave undone.

*Lucretia.* Would it were done !

*Beatrice.* Even whilst

That doubt is passing through your mind, the world

Is conscious of a change. Darkness and hell

Have swallowed up the vapour they sent forth

To blacken the sweet light of life.

My breath

Comes, methinks, lighter, and the jellied blood

Runs freely through my veins. Hark !

[*Enter OLIMPIO and MARZIO.*

He is—

*Olimbio.* Dead !

*Marzio.* We strangled him, that there might be no blood ;

And then we threw his heavy corpse i' the garden

Under the balcony ; 'twill seem it fell.

*Beatrice* (*giving them a bag of coin*).

Here, take this gold, and hasten to your homes.

And, Marzio, because thou wast only awed

By that which made me tremble, wear thou this !

[*Clothes him in a rich mantle.*

It was the mantle which my grandfather

Wore in his high prosperity, and men envied his state : so may they envy thine.

[*God* Thou wert a weapon in the hand of To a just use. Live long and thrive !

And, mark,

If thou hast crimes, repent : this deed is none. [*A horn is sounded.*

*Lucretia.* Hark, 'tis the castle horn : my God ! it sounds

Like the last trump.

*Beatrice.* Some tedious guest is coming.

*Lucretia.* The drawbridge is let down ; there is a tramp

Of horses in the court ! fly, hide yourselves !

[*Exeunt OLIMPIO and MARZIO.*

*Beatrice.* Let us retire to counterfeit deep rest ;

I scarcely need to counterfeit it now ; The spirit which doth reign within these limbs

Seems strangely undisturbed. I could even sleep

Fearless and calm : all ill is surely past. [*Exeunt.*

#### SCENE IV.—*Another Apartment in the Castle.*

*Enter on one side the Legate SAVELLA, introduced by a Servant, and on the other LUCRETIA and BERNARDO.*

*Savella.* Lady, my duty to his Holiness

Be my excuse that thus unseasonably I break upon your rest. I must speak with

Count Cenci ; doth he sleep ?

*Lucretia* (*in a hurried and confused manner*). I think he sleeps ;

Yet, wake him not, I pray, spare me awhile,

He is a wicked and a wrathful man ; Should he be roused out of his sleep

to-night,

Which is, I know, a hell of angry dreams,

It were not well ; indeed it were not well.

Wait till daybreak,— (*Aside.*) O, I am deadly sick !

*Savella.* I grieve thus to distress you, but the Count

Must answer charges of the graves, import,

And suddenly ; such my commission is.

*Lucretia* (*with increased agitation*). I dare not rouse him, I know

none who dare ;

'Twere perilous ;—you might as safely waken

A serpent ; or a corpse in which some fiend

Were laid to sleep.

*Savella.* Lady, my moments here are counted. I must rouse him from his sleep,

Since none else dare.

*Lucretia* (*aside*). O, terror ! O, despair !

(To BERNARDO.) Bernardo, conduct  
you the Lord Legate to  
Your father's chamber.

[*Exeunt SAVELLA and BERNARDO.*

*Enter BEATRICE.*

*Beatrice.* 'Tis a messenger  
Come to arrest the culprit who now  
stands  
Before the throne of unappealable  
God.

Both Earth and Heaven, consenting  
arbiters,

Acquit our deed.

*Lucretia.* Oh, agony of fear !  
Would that he yet might live ! Even  
now I heard

The legate's followers whisper as they  
passed

They had a warrant for his instant  
death.

All was prepared by unforbidden  
means,

Which we must pay so dearly, hav-  
ing done.

Even now they search the tower, and  
find the body ;

Now they suspect the truth ; now  
they consult,

Before they come to tax us with the  
fact ;

O horrible, 'tis all discovered !

*Beatrice.* Mother,  
what is done wisely, is done well.

Be bold

As thou art just. 'Tis like a truant  
child,

To fear that others know what thou  
hast done,

Even from thine own strong con-  
sciousness, and thus

Write on unsteady eyes and altered  
cheeks

All thou wouldst hide. Be faithful  
to thyself,

And fear no other witness but thy  
fear.

For if, as cannot be, some circum-  
stance

Should rise in accusation, we can  
blind

Suspicion with such cheap astonish-  
ment,

Or overbear it with such guiltless  
pride,

As murderers cannot feign. The  
deed is done,

And what may follow now regards  
not me.

I am as universal as the light ;  
Free as the earth-surrounding air ; as

firm  
As the world's centre. Consequence,  
to me,

Is as the wind which strikes the solid  
rock,

But shakes it not.

[*A cry within and tumult.*

*Voices.* Murder ! Murder ! Murder !

*Enter BERNARDO and SAVELLA.*

*Savella (to his followers).* Go, search  
the castle round ; sound the  
alarm ;

Look to the gates, that none escape !

*Beatrice.* What now ?

*Bernardo.* I know not what to say  
—my father's dead.

*Beatrice.* How, dead ? he only  
sleeps ; you mistake, brother.

His sleep is very calm, very like death ;  
'Tis wonderful how well a tyrant

sleeps.

He is not dead ?

*Bernardo.* Dead ; murdered !

*Lucretia (with extreme agitation).*

Oh, no, no,

He is not murdered, though he may  
be dead ;

I have alone the keys of those apart-  
ments.

*Savella.* Ha ! Is it so ?

*Beatrice.* My lord, I pray excuse

us ;

We will retire ; my mother is not well ;  
She seems quite overcome with this

strange horror.

[*Exeunt LUCRETIA and BEATRICE.*

*Savella.* Can you suspect who may  
have murdered him ?

*Bernardo.* I know not what to  
think.

*Savella.* Can you name any  
Who had an interest in his death ?

*Bernardo.* Alas !

I can name none who had not, and  
those most

Who most lament that such a deed is  
done ;

My mother, and my sister, and my-  
self.

*Savella.* 'Tis strange ! There were  
clear marks of violence.  
I found the old man's body in the  
moonlight,  
Hanging beneath the window of his  
chamber  
Among the branches of a pine : he  
could not  
Have fallen there, for all his limbs lay  
heaped  
And effortless ; 'tis true there was no  
blood.—

Favour me, sir—it much imports  
your house  
That all should be made clear—to tell  
the ladies  
That I request their presence.

[*Exit* BERNARDO.]

*Enter Guards, bringing in* MARZIO.

*Guard.* We have one.

*Officer.* My lord, we found this ruf-  
fian and another  
Lurking among the rocks ; there is no  
doubt

But that they are the murderers of  
Count Cenci :

Each had a bag of coin ; this fellow  
wore

A gold-inwoven robe, which, shining  
bright

Under the dark rocks to the glimmer-  
ing moon,

Betrayed them to our notice : the  
other fell

Desperately fighting.

*Savella.* What does he confess ?

*Officer.* He keeps firm silence ; but  
these lines found on him

May speak.

*Savella.* Their language is at least  
sincere.

[*Reads.*]

" TO THE LADY BEATRICE.

" That the atonement of what my  
nature sickens to conjecture may soon  
arrive, I send thee, at thy brother's  
desire, those who will speak and do  
more than I dare write.

" Thy devoted servant,

" ORSINO."

*Enter* LUCRETIA, BEATRICE, and  
BERNARDO.

Knowest thou this writing, lady ?

*Beatrice.*

No.

*Savella.* Nor thou ?  
*Lucretia* (*her conduct throughout the  
scene is marked by extreme agita-  
tion*).

Where was it found ? What is it ?  
It should be

Orsino's hand ! It speaks of that  
strange horror

Which never yet found utterance, but  
which made

Between that hapless child and her  
dead father

A gulf of obscure hatred.

*Savella.*

Is it so ?

Is it true, lady, that thy father did

Such outrages as to awaken in thee

Unfilial hate ?

*Beatrice.* Not hate, 'twas more  
than hate :

This is most true, yet wherefore ques-  
tion me ?

*Savella.* There is a deed demanding  
question done ;

[*not.*]

Thou hast a secret which will answer  
*Beatrice.* What sayest ? My lord,

your words are bold and rash.

*Savella.* I do arrest all present in  
the name

Of the Pope's Holiness. You must  
to Rome.

*Lucretia.* O, not to Rome ! In-  
deed we are not guilty.

*Beatrice.* Guilty ! Who dares talk  
of guilt ? My lord,

I am more innocent of parricide

Than is a child born fatherless. Dear  
mother,

Your gentleness and patience are no  
shield

For this keen-judging world, this two-  
edged lie,

Which seems, but is not. What !  
will human laws,

Rather will ye who are their ministers,  
Bar all access to retribution first,

And then, when Heaven doth inter-  
pose to do

What ye neglect, arming familiar  
things

To the redress of an unwonted crime,  
Make ye the victims who demanded it

Culprits ? 'Tis ye are culprits ! That  
poor wretch

Who stands so pale, and trembling,  
and amazed,

If it be true he murdered Cenci, was

A sword in the right hand of justest  
God.

Wherefore should I have wielded it ?  
unless

The crimes which mortal tongue dare  
never name,

God therefore scruples to avenge.

*Savella.* You own  
That you desired his death ?

*Beatrice.* It would have been  
A crime no less than his, if for one  
moment

That fierce desire had faded in my  
heart.

'Tis true I did believe, and hope, and  
pray,

Ay, I even knew—for God is wise and  
just,

That some strange sudden death hung  
over him.

'Tis true that this did happen, and  
most true,

There was no other rest for me on  
No other hope in Heaven ;—now  
what of this ?

*Savella.* Strange thoughts beget  
strange deeds ; and here are  
both :

I judge thee not.

*Beatrice.* And yet, if you arrest me,  
You are the judge and executioner  
Of that which is the life of life : the  
breath

Of accusation kills an innocent name,  
And leaves for lame acquittal the  
poor life,

Which is a mask without it. 'Tis  
most false

That I am guilty of foul parricide ;  
Although I must rejoice, for justest  
cause,

That other hands have sent my  
father's soul

To ask the mercy he denied to me.  
Now leave us free : stain not a noble  
house

With vague surmises of rejected  
crime ;

Add to our sufferings and your own  
neglect

No heavier sum ; let them have been  
enough :

Leave us the wreck we have.

*Savella.* I dare not, lady.  
I pray that you prepare yourselves for  
Rome :

There the Pope's further pleasure will  
be known.

*Lucretia.* O, not to Rome ! O,  
take us not to Rome !

*Beatrice.* Why not to Rome, dear  
mother ? There, as here,

Our innocence is as an armed heel  
To trample accusation. God is there,  
As here, and with his shadow ever  
clothes

The innocent, the injured and the  
weak ;

And such are we. Cheer up, dear  
lady ! lean

On me ; collect your wandering  
thoughts. My lord,

As soon as you have taken some re-  
freshment,

And had all such examinations made  
Upon the spot, as may be necessary  
To the full understanding of this mat-  
ter,

We shall be ready. Mother, will you  
come ?

*Lucretia.* Ha ! they will bind us to  
the rack, and wrest

Self-accusation from our agony !  
Will Giacomo be there ? Orsino ?  
Marzio ?

All present ; all confronted ; all de-  
manding

Each from the other's countenance  
the thing

Which is in every heart ! O, misery !  
[*She faints, and is borne out.*]

*Savella.* She faints ; an ill appear-  
ance this.

*Beatrice.* My lord,

She knows not yet the uses of the  
world.

She fears that power is as a beast  
which grasps

And loosens not : a snake whose look  
transmutes

All things to guilt, which is its nutri-  
ment.

She cannot know how well the supine  
slaves

Of blind authority read the truth of  
things

When written on a brow of guileless-  
ness :

She sees not yet triumphant Inno-  
cence

Stand at the judgment-seat of mortal  
man,

A judge and an accuser of the wrong  
Which drags it there. Prepare your-  
self, my lord ;  
Our suite will join yours in the court  
below. [Exeunt.]

## ACT V

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in ORSINO'S Palace.*

*Enter ORSINO and GIACOMO.*

*Giacomo.* Do evil deeds thus  
quickly come to end ?

O that the vain remorse which must  
chastise

Crimes done, had but as loud a voice  
to warn,

As its keen sting is mortal to avenge !  
O that the hour when present had  
cast off

The mantle of its mystery, and shown  
The ghastly form with which it now  
returns

When its scared game is roused,  
cheering the hounds

Of conscience to their prey ! Alas,  
alas !

It was a wicked thought, a piteous  
deed,

To kill an old and hoary-headed  
father.

*Orsino.* It has turned out unluckily,  
in truth.

*Giacomo.* To violate the sacred  
doors of sleep ;

To cheat kind nature of the placid  
death

Which she prepares for overwearied  
age ;

To drag from Heaven an unrepentant  
soul,

Which might have quenched in recon-  
ciling prayers

A life of burning crimes—

*Orsino.* You cannot say  
I urged you to the deed.

*Giacomo.* O, had I never  
Found in thy smooth and ready  
countenance

The mirror of my darkest thoughts ;  
hadst thou

Never with hints and questions made  
me look

Upon the monster of my thought,  
until

It grew familiar to desire—

*Orsino.* 'Tis thus

Men cast the blame of their unpros-  
perous acts

Upon the abettors of their own re-  
solve ;

Or any thing but their weak, guilty  
selves.

And yet, confess the truth, it is the  
peril

In which you stand that gives you  
this pale sickness

Of penitence ; confess, 'tis fear dis-  
guised

From its own shame that takes the  
mantle now

Of thin remorse. What if we yet  
were safe ?

*Giacomo.* How can that be ? Al-  
ready Beatrice,

Lucretia, and the murderer, are in  
prison. [speak,

I doubt not officers are, whilst we  
sent to arrest us.

*Orsino.* I have all prepared  
For instant flight. We can escape

even now,  
So we take fleet occasion by the hair.

*Giacomo.* Rather expire in tor-  
tures, as I may.

What ! will you cast by self-accusing  
flight

Assured conviction upon Beatrice ?  
She who alone, in this unnatural

work,  
Stands like God's angel ministered

upon  
By fiends ; avenging such a nameless

wrong  
As turns black parricide to piety ;

Whilst we for basest ends—I fear, Or-  
sino,

While I consider all your words and  
looks,

Comparing them with your proposal  
now,

That you must be a villain. For  
what end

Could you engage in such a perilous  
crime,

Training me on with hints, and signs,  
and smiles,

Even to this gulf ? Thou art no liar  
No.

Thou art a lie! Traitor and murderer!

Coward and slave! But no—defend thyself; [*Drawing.*]

Let the sword speak what the indignant tongue

Disdains to brand thee with.

*Orsino.* Put up your weapon.

Is it the desperation of your fear

Makes you thus rash and sudden with your friend,

Now ruined for your sake? If honest anger

Have moved you, know, that what I just proposed

Was but to try you. As for me, I think

Thankless affection led me to this point,

From which, if my firm temper could repent,

I cannot now recede. Even whilst we speak,

The ministers of justice wait below: They grant me these brief moments.

Now, if you

Have any word of melancholy comfort

To speak to your pale wife, 'twere best to pass

Out at the postern, and avoid them so.

*Giacomo.* Oh, generous friend!

How canst thou pardon me?

Would that my life could purchase thine!

*Orsino.* That wish Now comes a day too late. Haste; fare thee well!

Hear'st thou not steps along the corridor? [*Exit GIACOMO.*]

I'm sorry for it; but the guards are waiting

At his own gate, and such was my contrivance

That I might rid me both of him and them.

I thought to act a solemn comedy Upon the painted scene of this new world,

And to attain my own peculiar ends By some such plot of mingled good and ill

As others weave; but there arose a Power

Which grasped and snapped the threads of my device,

S. P.

And turned it to a net of ruin—Ha!

[*A shout is heard.*]

Is that my name I hear proclaimed abroad?

But I will pass, wrapt in a vile disguise;

Rags on my back, and a false innocence

Upon my face, through the misdeeming crowd,

Which judges by what seems. 'Tis easy then,

For a new name, and for a country new,

And a new life, fashioned on old desires,

To change the honours of abandoned Rome.

And these must be the masks of that within,

Which must remain unaltered.—Oh, I fear

That what is past will never let me rest!

Why, when none else is conscious, but myself,

Of my misdeeds, should my own heart's contempt

Trouble me? Have I not the power to fly

My own reproaches? Shall I be the slave

Of—what? A word! which those of this false world

Employ against each other, not themselves;

As men wear daggers not for self-offence.

But if I am mistaken, where shall I Find the disguise to hide me from myself,

As now I skulk from every other eye? [*Exit.*]

#### SCENE II.—*A Hall of Justice.*

CAMILLO, JUDGES, etc., are discovered seated; MARZIO is led in.

*First Judge.* Accused, do you persist in your denial?

I ask you, are you innocent, or guilty? I demand who were the participators

In your offence? Speak truth, and the whole truth.

*Marzio.* My God! I did not kill him; I know nothing;

B



Olimpio sold the robe to me from  
which

You would infer my guilt.

*Second Judge.* Away with him!

*First Judge.* Dare you, with lips  
yet white from the rack's kiss,

Speak false? Is it so soft a ques-  
tioner,

That you would bandy lover's talk  
with it,

Till it wind out your life and soul?

Away!

*Marzio.* Spare me! O, spare! I  
will confess.

*First Judge.* Then speak.

*Marzio.* I strangled him in his  
sleep.

*First Judge.* Who urged you to it?

*Marzio.* His own son Giacomo and  
the young prelate

Orsino sent me to Petrella; there

The ladies Beatrice and Lucretia

Tempted me with a thousand crowns,  
and I

And my companion forthwith mur-  
dered him.

Now let me die.

*First Judge.* This sounds as bad as  
truth. Guards, there,

Lead forth the prisoners.

[*Enter* LUCRETIA, BEATRICE, and  
GIACOMO, guarded.

Look upon this man;

When did you see him last?

*Beatrice.* We never saw him.

*Marzio.* You know me too well,  
Lady Beatrice.

*Beatrice.* I know thee! How!  
where? when?

*Marzio.* You know 'twas I  
Whom you did urge with menaces and  
bribes

To kill your father. When the thing  
was done, [gold,

You clothed me in a robe of woven

And bade me thrive: how I have  
thriven, you see.

You, my Lord Giacomo, Lady Lu-  
cretia,

You know that what I speak is true.

[*BEATRICE advances toward him; he  
covers his face, and shrinks back.*

Oh, dart

The terrible resentment of those eyes  
On the dread earth! Turn them  
away from me!

They wound: 'twas torture forced  
the truth. My lords,  
Having said this, let me be led to  
death.

*Beatrice.* Poor wretch, I pity thee:  
yet stay awhile.

*Camillo.* Guards, lead him not  
away.

*Beatrice.* Cardinal Camillo,  
You have a good repute for gentleness  
And wisdom: can it be that you sit  
here

To countenance a wicked farce like  
this?

When some obscure and trembling  
slave is dragged

From sufferings which might shake  
the sternest heart,

And bade to answer, not as he believes,  
But as those may suspect or do desire,

Whose questions thence suggest their  
own reply: [ments

And that in peril of such hideous tor-  
As merciful God spares even the  
damned. Speak now

The thing you surely know, which is,  
that you,

If your fine frame were stretched up-  
on that wheel,

And you were told, "Confess that  
you did poison

Your little nephew: that fair blue-  
eyed child

Who was the lodestar of your life:"  
and though

All see, since his most swift and pite-  
ous death,

That day and night, and heaven and  
earth, and time,

And all the things hoped for or done  
therein,

Are changed to you, through your ex-  
ceeding grief,

Yet you would say, "I confess any-  
thing"—

And beg from your tormentors, like  
that slave,

The refuge of dishonourable death.

I pray thee, Cardinal, that thou assert  
My innocence.

*Camillo (much moved).* What shall  
we think, my lords?

Shame on these tears! I thought the  
heart was frozen

Which is their fountain. I would  
pledge my soul

That she is guiltless.

*Judge.* Yet she must be tortured.

*Camillo.* I would as soon have tortured mine own nephew  
(If he now lived, he would be just her age ;

His hair, too, was her colour, and his eyes

Like hers in shape, but blue, and not so deep :)

As that most perfect image of God's love

That ever came sorrowing upon the earth.

She is as pure as speechless infancy !

*Judge.* Well, be her purity on your head, my lord,

If you forbid the rack. His Holiness [crime

Enjoined us to pursue this monstrous By the severest forms of law ; nay, even

To stretch a point against the criminals.

The prisoners stand accused of parricide,

Upon such evidence as justifies Torture.

*Beatrice.* What evidence ? This man's ?

*Judge.* Even so.

*Beatrice* (to MARZIO). Come near.  
And who art thou, thus chosen forth

Out of the multitude of living men,  
To kill the innocent ?

*Marzio.* I am Marzio,  
Thy father's vassal.

*Beatrice.* Fix thine eyes on mine ;  
Answer to what I ask.

[Turning to the Judges.

I prithee mark  
His countenance : unlike bold calumny,

Which sometimes dares not speak  
the thing it looks,

He dares not look the thing he speaks,  
but bends

His gaze on the blind earth.

(To MARZIO.) What ! wilt thou say  
That I did murder my own father ?

*Marzio.* Oh !  
Spare me ! My brain swims round—  
I cannot speak—

It was that horrid torture forced the  
truth.

Take me away ! Let her not look on  
me !

I am a guilty miserable wretch !

I have said all I know ; now, let me  
die !

*Beatrice.* My lords, if by my nature  
I had been

So stern, as to have planned the crime  
alleged,

Which your suspicions dictate to this  
slave,

And the rack makes him utter, do you  
think

I should have left this two-edged in-  
strument

Of my misdeed ; this man ; this  
bloody knife,

With my own name engraven on the  
hilt,

Lying unsheathed amid a world of  
foes,

For my own death ? That with such  
horrible need

For deepest silence, I should have  
neglected

So trivial a precaution, as the making  
His tomb the keeper of a secret writ-  
ten

On a thief's memory ? What is his  
poor life ?

[cide  
What are a thousand lives ? A parri-  
Had trampled them like dust ; and

see, he lives !

[Turning to MARZIO.

And thou—

*Marzio.* Oh, spare me ! Speak  
to me no more !

That stern yet piteous look, those  
solemn tones,

Wound worse than torture.

(To the Judges.) I have told it all :  
For pity's sake lead me away to death.

*Camillo.* Guards, lead him nearer  
the Lady Beatrice,

He shrinks from her regard like au-  
tumn's leaf

From the keen breath of the serenest  
north.

*Beatrice.* Oh, thou who tremblest  
on the giddy verge

Of life and death, pause ere thou  
answerest me ;

So mayst thou answer God with less  
dismay :

What evil have we done thee ? I,  
alas !

Have lived but on this earth a few sad years,  
 And so my lot was ordered, that a father  
 First turned the moments of awakening life  
 To drops, each poisoning youth's sweet hope ; and then  
 Stabbed with one blow my everlasting soul,  
 And my untainted fame ; and even that peace  
 Which sleeps within the core of the heart's heart.  
 But the wound was not mortal ; so my hate  
 Became the only worship I could lift  
 To our great Father, who in pity and love,  
 Armed thee, as thou dost say, to cut him off ;  
 And thus his wrong becomes my accusation :  
 And art thou the accuser ? If thou hopest  
 Mercy in heaven, show justice upon earth :  
 Worse than a bloody hand is a hard heart.  
 If thou hast done murders, made thy life's path  
 Over the trampled laws of God and man,  
 Rush not before thy Judge, and say :  
 " My Maker,  
 I have done this and more ; for there was one  
 Who was most pure and innocent on earth ;  
 And because she endured what never any,  
 Guilty or innocent, endured before ;  
 Because her wrongs could not be told, nor thought ;  
 Because thy hand at length did rescue her ;  
 I with my words killed her and all her kin."  
 Think, I adjure you, what it is to slay  
 The reverence living in the minds of men  
 Towards our ancient house, and stainless fame !  
 Think what it is to strangle infant pity,  
 Cradled in the belief of guileless looks,

Till it become a crime to suffer. Think  
 What 'tis to blot with infamy and blood  
 All that which shows like innocence, and is,—  
 Hear me, great God ! I swear, most innocent,—  
 So that the world lose all discrimination  
 Between the sly, fierce, wild regard of guilt,  
 And that which now compels thee to reply  
 To what I ask : Am I, or am I not  
 A parricide ?  
*Marzio.* Thou art not !  
*Judge.* What is this ?  
*Marzio.* I here declare those whom I did accuse  
 Are innocent. 'Tis I alone am guilty.  
*Judge.* Drag him away to tortments ; let them be  
 Subtle and long drawn out, to tear the folds  
 Of the heart's inmost cell. Unbind him not  
 Till he confess.  
*Marzio.* Torture me as ye will :  
 A keener pain has wrung a higher truth  
 From my last breath. She is most innocent !  
 Bloodhounds, not men, glut yourselves well with me !  
 I will not give you that fine piece of nature  
 To rend and ruin.  
 [Exit MARZIO, guarded.  
*Camillo.* What say ye now, my lords ?  
*Judge.* Let tortures strain the truth till it be white  
 As snow thrice-sifted by the frozen wind.  
*Camillo.* Yet stained with blood.  
*Judge (to BEATRICE).* Know you this paper, lady ?  
*Beatrice.* Entrap me not with questions. Who stands here  
 As my accuser ! Ha ! wilt thou be he,  
 Who art my judge ? Accuser, witness, judge,  
 What, all in one ? Here is Orsino's name ;  
 Where is Orsino ? Let his eye meet mine.

What means this scrawl? Alas! ye  
 know not what,  
 And therefore on the chance that it  
 may be  
 Some evil, will ye kill us?

*Enter an Officer.*

*Officer.* Marzio's dead.

*Judge.* What did he say?

*Officer.* Nothing. As soon as we  
 Had bound him on the wheel, he  
 smiled on us,  
 As one who baffles a deep adversary;  
 And, holding his breath, died.

*Judge.* There remains nothing  
 But to apply the question to those  
 prisoners,

Who yet remain stubborn.

*Camillo.* I overrule  
 Further proceedings, and in the be-  
 half

Of these most innocent and noble  
 persons

Will use my interest with the Holy  
 Father.

*Judge.* Let the Pope's pleasure  
 then be done. Meanwhile

Conduct these culprits each to separ-  
 ate cells;

And be the engines ready: for this  
 night,

If the Pope's resolution be as grave,  
 Pious, and just as once, I'll wring the  
 truth

Out of those nerves and sinews, groan  
 by groan. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Cell of a Prison.*

BEATRICE is discovered asleep on a  
 couch.

*Enter BERNARDO.*

*Bernardo.* How gently slumber  
 rests upon her face,  
 Like the last thoughts of some day  
 sweetly spent,  
 Closing in night and dreams, and so  
 prolonged.

After such torments as she bore last  
 night,

How light and soft her breathing  
 comes. Ah, me!

Methinks that I shall never sleep  
 again.

But I must shake the heavenly dew of  
 rest

From this sweet folded flower, thus—  
 wake; awake;

What, sister, canst thou sleep?

*Beatrice (awaking).* I was just  
 dreaming

That we were all in Paradise. Thou  
 knowest

This cell seems like a kind of Paradise  
 After our father's presence.

*Bernardo.* Dear, dear sister,  
 Would that thy dream were not a  
 dream! O, God!

How shall I tell?

*Beatrice.* What wouldst thou tell,  
 sweet brother?

*Bernardo.* Look not so calm and  
 happy, or, even whilst

I stand considering what I have to  
 say,

My heart will break.

*Beatrice.* See now, thou mak'st  
 me weep:

How very friendless thou wouldst be,  
 dear child,

If I were dead. Say what thou hast  
 to say.

*Bernardo.* They have confessed;  
 they could endure no more

The tortures—

*Beatrice.* Ha! What was there  
 to confess?

They must have told some weak and  
 wicked lie

To flatter their tormentors. Have  
 they said

That they were guilty? O white in-  
 nocence,

That thou shouldst wear the mask of  
 guilt to hide

Thine awful and serenest countenance  
 From those who know thee not!

*Enter JUDGE, with LUCRETIA and  
 GIACOMO, guarded.*

Ignoble hearts!

For some brief spasms of pain, which  
 are at least

As mortal as the limbs through which  
 they pass,

Are centuries of high splendour laid in  
 dust?

And that eternal honour which should  
 live

Sunlike, above the reek of mortal  
 fame,

Changed to a mockery and a byword?

What!

Will you give up these boddies to be dragged

At horses' heels, so that our hair should sweep

The footsteps of the vain and senseless crowd,

Who, that they may make our calamity

Their worship and their spectacle, will leave

The churches and the theatres as void  
As their own hearts? Shall the light multitude

Fling, at their choice, curses or faded pity,

Sad funeral flowers to deck a living corpse,

Upon us as we pass, to pass away,  
And leave—what memory of our having been? thou,

Infamy, blood, terror, despair? O  
Who wert a mother to the parentless,  
Kill not thy child! Let not her wrongs kill thee!

Brother, lie down with me upon the rack,

And let us each be silent as a corpse;  
It soon will be as soft as any grave.

'Tis but the falsehood it can wring from fear

Makes the rack cruel.

*Giacomo.* They will tear the truth  
Even from thee at last, those cruel pains:

For pity's sake say thou art guilty now.

*Lucretia.* O, speak the truth! Let us all quickly die.

And after death, God is our judge, not they;

He will have mercy on us.

*Bernardo.* If indeed  
It can be true, say so, dear sister mine;

And then the Pope will surely pardon you,

And all be well.

*Judge.* Confess, or I will warp  
Your limbs with such keen tortures—

*Beatrice.* Tortures! Turn  
The rack henceforth into a spinning-wheel!

Torture your dog, that he may tell  
When last

He lapped the blood his master shed  
—not me!

My pangs are of the mind, and of the heart

And of the soul; ay, of the inmost soul,

Which weeps within tears as of burning gall

To see, in this ill world where none are true,

My kindred false to their deserted selves.

And with considering all the wretched life

Which I have lived, and its now wretched end;

And the small justice shown by Heaven and Earth

To me or mine; and what a tyrant thou art,

And what slaves these; and what a world we make,

The oppressor and the oppressed—such pangs compel

My answer. What is it thou wouldst with me?

*Judge.* Art thou not guilty of thy father's death?

*Beatrice.* Or wilt thou rather tax high-judging God

That he permitted such an act as that  
Which I have suffered, and which he beheld;

Made it unutterable, and took from it  
All refuge, all revenge, all consequence,

But that which thou hast called my father's death?

Which is or is not what men call a crime,

Which either I have done, or have not done;

Say what ye will. I shall deny no more.

If ye desire it thus, thus let it be,  
And so an end of all. Now do your will;

No other pains shall force another word.

*Judge.* She is convicted, but has not confessed.

Be it enough. Until their final sentence

Let none have converse with them.

You, young lord,

Linger not here !

*Beatrice.* O, tear him not away !

*Judge.* Guards ! do your duty.

*Bernardo* (*embracing BEATRICE*).

Oh ! would ye divide

Body from soul ?

*Officer.* That is the headsman's business.

[*Exeunt all but* LUCRETIA, BEATRICE, and GIACOMO.

*Giacomo.* Have I confessed ? Is it all over now ?

No hope ? no refuge ? O weak, wicked tongue,

Which hast destroyed me, would that thou hadst been

Cut out and thrown to dogs first ! To have killed

My father first, and then betrayed my sister ;

Ay, thee ! the one thing innocent and pure

In this black, guilty world, to that which I

So well deserve ! My wife ! my little ones !

Destitute, helpless ; and I—Father ! God !

Canst thou forgive even the unforgiving,

When their full hearts break thus, thus ?—

[*Covers his face and weeps.*

*Lucretia.* O, my child !

To what a dreadful end are we all come !

Why did I yield ? Why did I not sustain

Those torments ? Oh ! that I were all dissolved

Into these fast and unavailing tears, Which flow and feel not !

*Beatrice.* What 'twas weak to do, 'Tis weaker to lament, once being done ;

Take cheer ! The God who knew my wrong, and made

Our speedy act the angel of his wrath, Seems, and but seems, to have abandoned us.

Let us not think that we shall die for this.

Brother, sit near me ; give me your firm hand,

You had a manly heart. Bear up ! bear up !

Oh ! dearest lady, put your gentle head

Upon my lap, and try to sleep awhile : Your eyes look pale, hollow, and overworn,

With heaviness of watching and slow grief.

Come, I will sing you some low, sleepy tune,

Not cheerful, nor yet sad ; some dull old thing,

Some outworn and unused monotony, Such as our country gossips sing and spin,

Till they almost forget they live : lie down !

So ; that will do. Have I forgot the words ?

Faith ! they are sadder than I thought they were.

SONG.

False friend, wilt thou smile or weep

When my life is laid asleep ?

Little cares for a smile or a tear.

The clay-cold corpse upon the bier ;

Farewell ! Heigh ho !

What is this whispers low ?

There is a snake in thy smile, my dear ;

And bitter poison within thy tear.

Sweet sleep ! were death like to thee,

Or if thou couldst mortal be,

I would close these eyes of pain ;

When to wake ? Never again.

O World ! farewell !

Listen to the passing bell !

It says, thou and I must part,

With a light and a heavy heart.

[*The scene closes.*

SCENE IV.—*A Hall of the Prison.*

*Enter* CAMILLO and BERNARDO.

*Camillo.* The Pope is stern ; not to be moved or bent.

He looked as calm and keen as is the engine

Which tortures and which kills, exempt itself

From aught that it inflicts ; a marble form,

A rite, a law, a custom ; not a man. He frowned, as if to frown had been

the trick

Of his machinery, on the advocates

Presenting the defences, which he tore

And threw behind, muttering with  
hoarse, harsh voice :

" Which among ye defended their old  
father

Killed in his sleep ? " Then to an-  
other : " Thou

Dost this in virtue of thy place ; 'tis  
well."

He turned to me then, looking depre-  
cation,

And said these three words, coldly :  
" They must die."

*Bernardo.* And yet you left him  
not ?

*Camillo.* I urged him still ;  
Pleading, as I could guess, the devil-  
ish wrong

Which prompted your unnatural  
parent's death.

And he replied, " Paolo Santa Croce  
Murdered his mother yester evening,  
And he is fled. Parricide grows so  
rife,

That soon, for some just cause no  
doubt the young

Will strangle us all, dozing in our  
chairs.

Authority, and power, and hoary hair  
Are grown crimes capital. You are  
my nephew,

You come to ask their pardon ; stay  
a moment ;

Here is their sentence ; never see me  
more

Till, to the letter, it be all fulfilled."

*Bernardo.* O, God, not so ! I did  
believe indeed

That all you said was but sad prepara-  
tion

For happy news. O, there are words  
and looks

To bend the sternest purpose ! Once  
I knew them,

Now I forget them at my dearest  
need.

What think you if I seek him out, and  
bathe

His feet and robe with hot and bitter  
tears ?

Importune him with prayers, vexing  
his brain

With my perpetual cries, until in rage  
He strike me with his pastoral cross,

and trample

Upon my prostrate head, so that my  
blood

May stain the senseless dust on which  
he treads,

And remorse waken mercy ? I will  
do it !

O, wait till I return ! [*Rushes out.*  
*Camillo.* Alas ! poor boy !

A wreck-devoted seaman thus might  
pray

To the deaf sea.

*Enter LUCRETIA, BEATRICE, and*  
*GIACOMO, guarded.*

*Beatrice.* I hardly dare to fear  
That thou bring'st other news than a  
just pardon.

*Camillo.* May God in heaven be  
less inexorable

To the Pope's prayers, than he has  
been to mine.

Here is the sentence and the warrant.

*Beatrice (wildly).* Oh,

My God ! Can it be possible I have

To die so suddenly ? So young to go

Under the obscure, cold, rotting,  
wormy ground !

To be nailed down into a narrow  
place ;

To see no more sweet sunshine ; hear  
no more

Blithe voice of living thing ; muse  
not again

Upon familiar thoughts, sad, yet thus  
lost !

How fearful ! to be nothing ! Or to  
be—

What ? O, where am I ? Let me  
not go mad !

Sweet Heaven, forgive weak  
thoughts ! If there should be

No God, no Heaven, no Earth in the  
void world ;

The wide, grey, lampless, deep, un-  
peopled world !

If all things then should be—my  
father's spirit,

His eye, his voice, his touch sur-  
rounding me ;

The atmosphere and breath of my  
dead life !

If sometimes, as a shape more like  
himself,

Even the form which tortured me on  
earth,

Masked in grey hairs and wrinkles, he  
should come,

And wind me in his hellish arms, and  
fix

His eyes on mine, and drag me down,  
down, down !

For was he not alone omnipotent  
On Earth, and ever present ? even  
though dead,

Does not his spirit live in all that  
breathe,

And work for me and mine still the  
same ruin,

Scorn, pain, despair ? Who ever yet  
returned

To teach the laws of death's untrod-  
den realm ?

Unjust perhaps as those which drive  
us now,

O, whither, whither ?

*Lucretia.* Trust in God's sweet  
love,

The tender promises of Christ : ere  
night

Think we shall be in Paradise.

*Beatrice.* 'Tis past !

Whatever comes, my heart shall sink  
no more.

And yet, I know not why, your words  
strike chill :

How tedious, false and cold seem all  
things ! I

Have met with much injustice in this  
world ;

No difference has been made by God  
or man,

Or any power moulding my wretched  
lot,

'Twixt good or evil, as regarded me.  
I am cut off from the only world I

know,  
From light and life, and love, in  
youth's sweet prime.

You do well telling me to trust in  
God ;

I hope I do trust in him. In whom  
else

Can any trust ? And yet my heart is  
cold.

[*During the latter speeches*

*GIACOMO has retired conversing*  
*with CAMILLO, who now goes*  
*out : GIACOMO advances.*

*Giacomo.* Know you not, mother—  
sister, know you not ?

Bernardo even now is gone to implore  
The Pope to grant our pardon.

*Lucretia.* Child, perhaps,

It will be granted. We may all then  
live

To make these woes a tale for distant  
years :

O, what a thought ! It gushes to my  
heart

Like the warm blood.

*Beatrice.* Yet both will soon be  
cold :

O, trample out that thought ! Worse  
than despair,

Worse than the bitterness of death, is  
hope :

It is the only ill which can find place  
Upon the giddy, sharp, and narrow  
hour

Tottering beneath us. Plead with  
the swift frost

That it should spare the eldest flower  
of spring :

Plead with awakening earthquake,  
o'er whose couch

Even now a city stands, strong, fair  
and free ;

Now stench and blackness yawns, like  
death. O, plead

With famine, or wind-walking pestil-  
ence,

Blind lightning, or the deaf sea, not  
with man !

Cruel, cold, formal man ; righteous  
in words,

In deeds a Cain. No, mother, we  
must die :

Since such is the reward of innocent  
lives,

Such the alleviation of worst wrongs.  
And whilst our murderers live, and

hard, cold men,  
Smiling and slow, walk through a

world of tears  
To death as to life's sleep ; 'twere just

the grave  
Were some strange joy for us. Come,

obscure Death,  
And wind me in thine all-embracing

arms !  
Like a fond mother hide me in thy

bosom,  
And rock me to the sleep from which

none wake.  
Live ye, who live, subject to one

another  
As we were once, who now—

[*BERNARDO rushes in.*

*Bernardo.* O, horrible !



That tears, that looks, that hope  
 poured forth in prayer,  
 Even till the heart is vacant and  
 despairs,  
 Should all be vain ! The ministers  
 of death  
 Are waiting round the doors. I  
 thought I saw  
 Blood on the face of one—what if  
 'twere fancy ?  
 Soon the heart's blood of all I love on  
 earth  
 Will sprinkle him, and he will wipe it  
 off  
 As if 'twere only rain. O life ! O  
 world !  
 Cover me ! let me be no more ! To  
 see  
 That perfect mirror of pure innocence  
 Wherein I gazed, and grew happy  
 and good,  
 Shivered to dust ! To see thee,  
 Beatrice,  
 Who made all lovely thou didst look  
 upon—  
 Thee, light of life—dead, dark ! while  
 I say, sister,  
 To hear I have no sister ; and thou,  
 mother,  
 Whose love was a bond to all our  
 loves—  
 Dead ! The sweet bond broken.

*Enter CAMILLO and Guards.*

They come ! Let me  
 Kiss those warm lips before their  
 crimson leaves  
 Are blighted—white—cold. Say  
 farewell, before  
 Death chokes that gentle voice ! O  
 let me hear  
 You speak !

*Beatrice.* Farewell, my tender  
 brother. Think  
 Of our sad fate with gentleness, as  
 now :

And let mild, pitying thoughts  
 lighten for thee  
 Thy sorrow's load. Err not in harsh  
 despair,  
 But tears and patience. One thing  
 more, my child :  
 For thine own sake be constant to the  
 love  
 Thou bearest us ; and to the faith  
 that I,  
 Though wrapt in a strange cloud of  
 crime and shame,  
 Lived ever holy and unstained. And  
 though

Ill tongues shall wound me, and our  
 common name  
 Be as a mark stamped on thine inno-  
 cent brow  
 For men to point at as they pass, do  
 thou  
 Forbear, and never think a thought  
 unkind  
 Of those who perhaps love thee in  
 their graves.  
 So mayst thou die as I do ; fear and  
 pain  
 Being subdued. Farewell ! Farewell !  
 Farewell !

*Bernardo.* I cannot say farewell !  
*Camillo.* O, Lady Beatrice !

*Beatrice.* Give yourself no un-  
 necessary pain,

My dear Lord Cardinal. Here,  
 mother, tie  
 My girdle for me, and bind up this  
 hair

In any simple knot : ay, that does  
 well.  
 And yours I see is coming down. How  
 often

Have we done this for one another !  
 now

We shall not do it any more. My  
 lord,  
 We are quite ready. Well, 'tis very  
 well.

## HELLAS

## A LYRICAL DRAMA

MANTIS' EIM' 'ESΘAON 'AΓΩNON.

(EDIP. COLON.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY

PRINCE ALEXANDER MAVROCORDATO,

LATE SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO THE HOSPODAR OF WALLACHIA.

THE DRAMA OF HELLAS IS INSCRIBED,

AS AN IMPERFECT TOKEN OF THE ADMIRATION, SYMPATHY, AND FRIENDSHIP OF  
THE AUTHOR.

PISA, November 1, 1821.

## PREFACE

THE poem of "Hellas," written at the suggestion of the events of the moment, is a mere improvise, and derives its interest (should it be found to possess any) solely from the intense sympathy which the Author feels with the cause he would celebrate.

The subject, in its present state, is insusceptible of being treated otherwise than lyrically, and if I have called this poem a drama, from the circumstance of its being composed in dialogue, the licence is not greater than that which has been assumed by other poets, who have called their productions epics, only because they have been divided into twelve or twenty-four books.

The "Persæ" of Æschylus afforded me the first model of my conception, although the decision of the glorious contest now waging in Greece being yet suspended, forbids a catastrophe parallel to the return of Xerxes and the desolation of the Persians. I have, therefore, contented myself with exhibiting a series of lyric pictures, and with having wrought upon the curtain of futurity, which falls upon the unfinished scene, such figures of indistinct and visionary delineation as suggest the final triumph of the Greek cause as a portion of the cause of civilisation and social improvement.

The drama (if drama it must be called) is, however, so inartificial that I doubt whether, if recited on the Thespian waggon to an Athenian village at the Dionysiaca, it would have obtained the prize of the goat. I shall bear with equanimity any punishment greater than the loss of such a reward which the Aristarchi of the hour may think fit to inflict.

The only *goat-song* which I have yet attempted has, I confess, in spite of the unfavourable nature of the subject, received a greater and a more valuable portion of applause than I expected, or than it deserved.

Common fame is the only authority which I can allege for the details which form the basis of the poem, and I must trespass upon the forgiveness of my readers for the display of newspaper erudition to which I have been reduced. Undoubtedly, until the conclusion of the war, it will be impossible to obtain an account of it sufficiently authentic for historical materials; but poets have their privilege, and it is unquestionable that actions of the most exalted courage have been performed by the Greeks—that they have gained more than one naval victory, and that their defeat in Wallachia was signalised by circumstances of heroism more glorious even than victory.

The apathy of the rulers of the civilised world, to the astonishing

circumstances of the descendants of that nation to which they owe their civilisation—rising as it were from the ashes of their ruin, is something perfectly inexplicable to a mere spectator of the shows of this mortal scene. We are all Greeks. Our laws, our literature, our religion, our arts, have their root in Greece. But for Greece—Rome the instructor, the conqueror, or the metropolis of our ancestors, would have spread no illumination with her arms, and we might still have been savages and idolators ; or, what is worse, might have arrived at such a stagnant and miserable state of social institutions as China and Japan possess.

The human form and the human mind attained to a perfection in Greece which has impressed its image on those faultless productions, whose very fragments are the despair of modern art, and has propagated impulses which cannot cease, through a thousand channels of manifest or imperceptible operation, to ennoble and delight mankind until the extinction of the race.

The modern Greek is the descendant of those glorious beings whom the imagination almost refuses to figure to itself as belonging to our kind ; and he inherits much of their sensibility, their rapidity of conception, their enthusiasm, and their courage. If in many instances he is degraded by moral and political slavery to the practice of the basest vices it engenders, and that below the level of ordinary degradation ; let us reflect that the corruption of the best produces the worst, and that habits which subsist only in relation to a peculiar state of social institution may be expected to cease, as soon as that relation is dissolved. In fact, the Greeks, since the admirable novel of "Anastatius" could have been a faithful picture of their manners, have undergone most important changes ; the flower of their youth, returning to their country from the universities of Italy, Germany, and France, have communicated to their fellow-citizens the latest results of that social per-

fection of which their ancestors were the original source. The university of Chios contained before the breaking out of the revolution, eight hundred students, and among them several Germans and Americans. The munificence and energy of many of the Greek princes and merchants, directed to the renovation of their country, with a spirit and a wisdom which has few examples, is above all praise.

The English permit their own oppressors to act according to their natural sympathy with the Turkish tyrant, and to brand upon their name the indelible blot of an alliance with the enemies of domestic happiness, of Christianity, and civilisation.

Russia desires to possess, not to liberate Greece ; and is contented to see the Turks, its natural enemies, and the Greeks, its intended slaves, enfeeble each other, until one or both fall into its net. The wise and generous policy of England would have consisted in establishing the independence of Greece, and in maintaining it both against Russia and the Turks ;—but when was the oppressor generous or just ?

The Spanish Peninsula is already free. France is tranquil in the enjoyment of a partial exemption from the abuses which its unnatural and feeble government are vainly attempting to revive. The seed of blood and misery has been sown in Italy, and a more vigorous race is arising to go forth to the harvest. The world waits only the news of a revolution of Germany, to see the tyrants who have pinnacled themselves on its supineness, precipitated into the ruin from which they shall never rise. Well do these destroyers of mankind know their enemy, when they impute the insurrection in Greece to the same spirit before which they tremble throughout the rest of Europe ; and that enemy well knows the power and cunning of its opponents, and watches the moment of their approaching weakness and inevitable division, to wrest the bloody sceptres from their grasp.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MAHMUD  
HASSAN

CHORUS of Greek Captive Women.

DAOOD  
AHASUERUS, a Jew

Messengers, Slaves, and Attendants

SCENE—Constantinople TIME—Sunset

SCENE, a Terrace, on the Seraglio.

MAHMUD (*sleeping*), an Indian slave  
*sitting beside his Couch.*

CHORUS OF GREEK CAPTIVE WOMEN.

WE strew these opiate flowers  
On thy restless pillow,—  
They were stript from Orient bowers,  
By the Indian billow.  
Be thy sleep  
Calm and deep,  
Like theirs who fell—not ours who  
weep!

INDIAN.

Away, unlovely dreams!  
Away, false shapes of sleep!  
Be his, as Heaven seems,  
Clear, and bright, and deep!  
Soft as love, and calm as death,  
Sweet as a summer night without a  
breath.

CHORUS.

Sleep, sleep! our song is laden  
With the soul of slumber;  
It was sung by a Samian maiden,  
Whose lover was of the number  
Who now keep  
That calm sleep  
Whence none may wake, where none  
shall weep.

INDIAN.

I touch thy temples pale!  
I breathe my soul on thee!  
And could my prayers avail,  
All my joy should be  
Dead, and I would live to weep,  
So thou mightst win one hour of quiet  
sleep.

CHORUS.

Breath low, low,  
The spell of the mighty mistress  
now!  
When Conscience lulls her sated  
snake,  
And Tyrants sleep, let Freedom  
wake.  
Breathe low, low,

The words, which, like secret fire,  
shall flow  
Through the veins of the frozen earth  
—low, low!

SEMICHORUS I.

Life may change, but it may fly  
not;  
Hope may vanish, but can die not;  
Truth be veiled, but still it burneth;  
Love repulsed,—but it returneth!

SEMICHORUS II.

Yet were life a charnel, where  
Hope lay confined with Despair;  
Yet were truth a sacred lie,  
Love were lust—

SEMICHORUS I.

If Liberty  
Lent not life its soul of Light,  
Hope its iris of delight,  
Truth its prophet's robe to wear,  
Love its power to give and bear.

CHORUS.

In the great morning of the world,  
The spirit of God with might unfurled  
The flag of Freedom over Chaos,  
And all its banded anarchs fled,  
Like vultures frightened from Imaus,  
Before an earthquake's tread.—  
So from Time's tempestuous dawn  
Freedom's splendour burst and  
shone:—  
Thermopylae and Marathon  
Caught, like mountains beacon-  
lighted,  
The springing Fire.—The winged  
glory  
On Philippi half-alighted,  
Like an eagle on a promontory.  
Its unwearied wings could fan  
The quenchless ashes of Milan  
From age to age, from man to man  
It lived; and lit from land to land  
Florence, Albion, Switzerland.  
Then night fell; and, as from night,  
Re-assuming fiery flight,

From the West swift Freedom came,  
Against the course of heaven and  
doom,

A second sun arrayed in flame,  
To burn, to kindle, to illume.  
From far Atlantis its young beams  
Chased the shadows and the dreams.  
France, with all her sanguine steams,  
Hid, but quenched it not; again  
Through clouds its shafts of glory  
rain

From utmost Germany to Spain.  
As an eagle fed with morning  
Scorns the embattled tempest's warn-  
ing,

When she seeks her aerie hanging  
In the mountain-cedar's hair,  
And her brood expect the clanging  
Of her wings through the wild air,  
Sick with famine;—Freedom, so  
To what of Greece remaineth now  
Returns; her hoary ruins glow  
Like orient mountains lost in day;  
Beneath the safety of her wings  
Her renovated nurslings play,  
And in the naked lightnings  
Of truth they purge their dazzled  
eyes.

Let Freedom leave, where'er she flies,  
A Desert, or a Paradise;  
Let the beautiful and the brave  
Share her glory, or a grave.

SEMICHORUS I.

With the gifts of gladness  
Greece did thy cradle strew;

SEMICHORUS II.

With the tears of sadness  
Greece did thy shroud bedew;

SEMICHORUS I

With an orphan's affection  
She followed thy bier through  
time!

SEMICHORUS II.

And at thy resurrection  
Re-appeareth, like thou, sub-  
lime!

SEMICHORUS I.

If Heaven should resume thee,  
To Heaven shall her spirit  
ascend;

SEMICHORUS II.

If Hell should entomb thee,

To Hell shall her high hearts  
bend.

SEMICHORUS I.

If Annihilation—

SEMICHORUS II.

Dust let her glories be;  
And a name and a nation  
Be forgotten, Freedom with thee!

INDIAN.

His brow grows darker—breathe not  
—move not!

He starts—he shudders;—ye that  
love not,

With your panting loud and fast

Have awakened him at last.

*Mahmud (starting from his sleep).*

Man the Seraglio-guard! make  
fast the gate.

What! from a cannonade of three  
short hours?

'Tis false! that breach towards the  
Bosphorus

Cannot be practicable yet—Who  
stirs?

Stand to the match; that when the  
foe prevails,

One spark may mix in reconciling  
ruin

The conqueror and the conquered!  
Heave the tower

Into the gap—wrench off the roof.

[Enter HASSAN.

Ha! what!

The truth of day lightens upon my  
dream,

And I am Mahmud still.

*Hassan.* Your Sublime Highness  
Is strangely moved.

*Mahmud.* The times do cast  
strange shadows

On those who watch and who must  
rule their course,

Lest they, being first in peril as in  
glory,

Be whelmed in the fierce ebb:—and  
these are of them.

Thrice has a gloomy vision hunted me  
As thus from sleep into the troubled  
day;

It shakes me as the tempest shakes  
the sea,

Leaving no figure upon memory's  
glass.

Would that—no matter. Thou didst  
say thou knewest

A Jew, whose spirit is a chronicle  
Of strange and secret and forgotten  
things.

I bade thee summon him :—'tis said  
his tribe

Dream, and are wise interpreters of  
dreams.

*Hassan.* The Jew of whom I spake  
is old,—so old

He seems to have outlived a world's  
decay ;

The hoary mountains and the wrinkle  
d ocean

Seem younger still than he ; his hair  
and beard

Are whiter than the tempest-sifted  
snow ;

His cold pale limbs and pulseless  
arteries

Are like the fibres of a cloud instinct  
With light, and to the soul that  
quickens them

Are as the atoms of the mountain-  
drift

To the winter wind ;—but from his  
eye looks forth

A life of unconsumed thought, which  
pierces [come.

The present, and the past, and the to-  
Some say that this is he whom the  
great prophet

Jesus, the son of Joseph, for his  
mockery,

Mocked with the curse of immortality.  
Some feign that he is Enoch ; others

dream

He was pre-Adamite, and has survived  
Cycles of generation and of ruin.

The sage, in truth, by dreadful  
abstinence,

And conquering penance of the  
mutinous flesh,

Deep contemplation, and unwearied  
study,

In years outstretched beyond the date  
of man,

May have attained to sovereignty  
and science

Over those strong and secret things  
and thoughts

Which others fear and know not.  
*Mahmud.* I would talk

With this old Jew.  
*Hassan.* Thy will is even now

Made known to him, where he dwells  
in a sea-cavern

'Mid the Demonesi, less accessible  
Than thou or God ! He who would  
question him

Must sail alone at sunset, where the  
stream

Of ocean sleeps around those foamless  
isles

When the young moon is westering as  
now,

And evening airs wander upon the  
wave ;

And when the pines of that bee-  
pasturing isle,

Green Erebinthus, quench the fiery  
shadow

Of his gilt prow within the sapphire  
water,

Then must the lonely helmsman cry  
aloud,

"Ahasuerus !" and the caverns round  
Will answer, Ahasuerus ! If his prayer  
Be granted, a faint meteor will arise,

Lighting him over Marmora, and a  
wind

Will rush out of the sighing pine  
forest,

And with the wind a storm of har-  
mony

Unutterably sweet, and pilot him  
Through the soft twilight to the  
Bosphorus :

Thence, at the hour and place and  
circumstance

Fit for the matter of their conference,  
The Jew appears. Few dare, and few

who dare,

Win the desired communion—but  
that shout

Bodes— [*A shout within.*  
*Mahmud.* Evil, doubtless ; like all  
human sounds.

Let me converse with spirits.  
*Hassan.* That shout again.

*Mahmud.* This Jew whom thou  
hast summoned—

*Hassan.* Will be here—  
*Mahmud.* When the omnipotent

hour, to which are yoked  
He, I, and all things, shall compel—

enough.  
Silence those mutineers—that  
drunken crew

That crowd about the pilot in the  
storm.

Ay ! strike the foremost shorter by a  
head !

They weary me, and I have need of rest.

Kings are like stars—they rise and set, they have

The worship of the world, but no repose. [*Exeunt severally.*]

CHORUS.

Worlds on worlds are rolling ever  
From creation to decay,

Like the bubbles on a river,  
Sparkling, bursting, borne away.

But they are still immortal  
Who, through birth's orient  
portal,

And death's dark chasm hurrying to  
and fro,

Clothe their unceasing flight  
In the brief dust and light

Gathered around their chariots as  
they go ;

New shapes they still may  
weave,

New gods, new laws receive,  
Bright or dim are they, as the robes  
they last

On Death's bare ribs had cast.

A power from the unknown God ;  
A Promethean conqueror came ;

Like a triumphal path he trod  
The thorns of death and shame.

A mortal shape to him  
Was like the vapour dim

Which the orient planet animates  
with light ;

Hell, Sin, and Slavery came,  
Like bloodhounds mild and  
tame,

Nor preyed until their lord had taken  
flight.

The moon of Mahomet  
Arose, and it shall set :

While blazoned as on heaven's im-  
mortal noon

The Cross leads generations on

Swift as the radiant shapes of  
sleep

From one whose dreams are  
Paradise,

Fly, when the fond wretch wakes  
to weep,

And day peers forth with her  
blank eyes :

So fleet, so faint, so fair,

The Powers of earth and air  
Fled from the folding star of Bethle-  
hem :

Apollo, Pan, and Love,  
And even Olympian Jove

Grew weak, for killing Truth had  
glared on them.

Our hills, and seas, and  
streams,

Dispeopled of their dreams,  
Their waters turned to blood, their  
dew to tears,

Wailed for the golden years.

*Enter* MAHMUD, HASSAN, DAOOD,  
and others.

*Mahmud.* More gold ? our ances-  
tors bought gold with victory,  
And shall I sell it for defeat ?

*Daood.* The Janizars  
Clamour for pay.

*Mahmud.* Go ! bid them pay  
themselves

With Christian blood ! Are there no  
Grecian virgins

Whose shrieks and spasms and tears  
they may enjoy ?

No infidel children to impale on  
spears ?

No heary priests after that Patriarch  
Who bent the curse against his coun-  
try's heart,

Which clove his own at last ? Go !  
bid them kill :

Blood is the seed of gold.

*Daood.* It has been sown,  
And yet the harvest to the sickle-men  
Is as a grain to each.

*Mahmud.* Then take this signet,  
Unlock the seventh chamber, in  
which lie

The treasures of victorious Solyman.  
An empire's spoils stored for a day of  
ruin.

O spirit of my sires ! is it not come ?  
The prey-birds and the wolves are

gorged and sleep ;  
But these, who spread their feast on  
the red earth,

Hunger for gold, which fills not.—See  
them fed ;

Then lead them to the rivers of fresh  
death. [*Exit* DAOOD.

Oh ! miserable dawn, after a night  
More glorious than the day which it

usurped !

O faith in God ! O power on earth !  
 O word  
 Of the great Prophet, whose over-  
 shadowing wings  
 Darkened the thrones and idols of the  
 west,  
 Now bright !—For thy sake cursed be  
 the hour,  
 Even as a father by an evil child,  
 When the orient moon of Islam rolled  
 in triumph  
 From Caucasus to white Ceraunia !  
 Ruin above, and anarchy below ;  
 Terror without, and treachery within ;  
 The chalice of destruction full, and all  
 Thirsting to drink ; and who among  
 us dares  
 To dash it from his lips ? and where is  
 Hope ?  
*Hassan.* The lamp of our dominion  
 still rides high ;  
 One God is God—Mahomet is his  
 Prophet  
 Four hundred thousand Moslems,  
 from the limits  
 Of utmost Asia, irresistibly  
 Throng, like full clouds at the  
 sirocco's cry,  
 But not like them to weep their  
 strength in tears ;  
 They have destroying lightning, and  
 their step  
 Wakes earthquake, to consume and  
 overwhelm, [pus,  
 And reign in ruin. Phrygian Olym-  
 Tmolus, and Latmos, and Mycale,  
 roughen  
 With horrent arms, and lofty ships,  
 even now,  
 Like vapours anchored to a moun-  
 tain's edge,  
 Freight with fire and whirlwind,  
 wait at Scala  
 The convoy of the ever-veering wind.  
 Samos is drunk with blood ;—the  
 Greek has paid  
 Brief victory with swift loss and long  
 despair.  
 The false Moldavian serfs fled fast and  
 far  
 When the fierce shout of "Allah-illa-  
 Allah !"  
 Rose like the war-cry of the northern  
 wind,  
 Which kills the sluggish clouds, and  
 leaves a flock  
 Of wild swans struggling with the  
 naked storm.  
 So were the lost Greeks on the  
 Danube's day !  
 If night is mute, yet the returning  
 sun  
 Kindles the voices of the morning  
 birds ;  
 Nor at thy bidding less exultingly  
 Than birds rejoicing in the golden  
 day,  
 The Anarchies of Africa unleash  
 Their tempest-winged cities of the  
 sea,  
 To speak in thunder to the rebel  
 world.  
 Like sulphureous clouds half-shat-  
 tered by the storm,  
 They sweep the pale Ægean, while the  
 Queen  
 Of Ocean, bound upon her island  
 throne,  
 Far in the West, sits mourning that  
 her sons,  
 Who frown on Freedom, spare a smile  
 for thee.  
 Russia still hovers, as an eagle might  
 Within a cloud, near which a kite and  
 crane  
 Hang tangled in inextricable fight,  
 To stoop upon the victor ; for she  
 fears  
 The name of Freedom, even as she  
 hates thine  
 But recreant Austria loves thee as the  
 Grave  
 Loves Pestilence, and her slow dogs  
 of war,  
 Fleshed with the chase, come up from  
 Italy,  
 And howl upon their limits : for they  
 see  
 The panther Freedom fled to her old  
 cover,  
 Amid seas and mountains, and a  
 mightier brood  
 Crouch around. What Anarch wears  
 a crown or mitre,  
 Or bears the sword, or grasps the key  
 of gold,  
 Whose friends are not thy friends,  
 whose foes thy foes ?  
 Our arsenals and our armouries are  
 full ;  
 Our forts defy assaults ; ten thous-  
 and cannon



Lie ranged upon the beach, and hour  
 by hour  
 Their earth-convulsing wheels affright  
 the city  
 The galloping of fiery steeds makes  
 pale  
 The Christian merchant, and the  
 yellow Jew  
 Hides his hoard deeper in the faithless  
 earth.  
 Like clouds, and like the shadows of  
 the clouds,  
 Over the hills of Anatolia,  
 Swift in wide troops the Tartar  
 chivalry  
 Sweep;—the far-flashing of their  
 starry lances  
 Reverberates the dying light of day.  
 We have one God, one King, one  
 Hope, one Law;  
 But many-headed Insurrection stands  
 Divided in itself, and soon must fall.  
*Mahmud.* Proud words, when deeds  
 come short, are seasonable:  
 Look, Hassan, on yon crescent moon,  
 emblazoned  
 Upon that shattered flag of fiery cloud  
 Which leads the rear of the depart-  
 ing day,  
 Wan emblem of an empire fading  
 now!  
 See how it trembles in the blood-red  
 air, [spent,  
 And like a mighty lamp whose oil is  
 Shrinks on the horizon's edge, while,  
 from above,  
 One star with insolent and victorious  
 light  
 Hovers above its fall, and with keen  
 beams,  
 Like arrows through a fainting ante-  
 lope,  
 Strikes its weak form to death.  
*Hassan.* Even as that moon  
 Renews itself—  
*Mahmud.* Shall we be not renewed!  
 Far other bark than ours were needed  
 now  
 To stem the torrent of descending  
 time:  
 The spirit that lifts the slave before  
 its lord  
 Stalks through the capitals of armed  
 kings,  
 And spreads his ensign in the wilder-  
 ness;

Exults in chains; and when the rebel  
 falls,  
 Cries like the blood of Abel from the  
 dust;  
 And the inheritors of earth, like  
 beasts  
 When earthquake is unleashed, with  
 idiot fear  
 Cower in their kingly dens—as I do  
 now.  
 What were defeat, when Victory  
 must appal?  
 Or Danger, when Security looks pale?  
 How said the messenger—who from  
 the fort  
 Islanded in the Danube, saw the  
 battle  
 Of Bucharest?—that—  
*Hassan.* Ibrahim's scimitar  
 Drew with its gleam swift victory  
 from heaven,  
 To burn before him in the night of  
 battle—  
 A light and a destruction.  
*Mahmud.* Ay! the day  
 Was ours; but how?—  
*Hassan.* The light Wallachians,  
 The Arnaut, Servian, and Albanian  
 allies,  
 Fled from the glance of our artillery  
 Almost before the thunder-stone alit;  
 One half the Grecian army made a  
 bridge  
 Of safe and slow retreat, with Moslem  
 dead;  
 The other—  
*Mahmud.* Speak—tremble not—  
*Hassan.* Islanded  
 By victor myriads, formed in hollow  
 square  
 With rough and steadfast front, and  
 thrice flung back  
 The deluge of our foaming cavalry;  
 Thrice their keen wedge of battle  
 pierced our lines.  
 Our baffled army trembled like one  
 man  
 Before a host, and gave them space.  
 but soon,  
 From the surrounding hills, the  
 batteries blazed,  
 Kneading them down with fire and  
 iron rain.  
 Yet none approached; till, like a field  
 of corn

Under the hook of the swart sickle-  
 man,  
 The bands, entrenched in mounds of  
 Turkish dead,  
 Grew weak and few. Then said the  
 Pacha, "Slaves,  
 Render yourselves—they have aban-  
 doned you—  
 What hope of refuge, or retreat, or  
 aid?  
 We grant your lives."—"Grant that  
 which is thine own,"  
 Cried one, and fell upon his sword and  
 died!  
 Another—"God, and man, and hope  
 abandon me;  
 But I to them and to myself remain  
 Constant;" he bowed his head, and  
 his heart burst.  
 A third exclaimed, "There is a refuge,  
 tyrant,  
 Where thou darest not pursue, and  
 canst not harm,  
 Shouldst thou pursue; there we shall  
 meet again."  
 Then held his breath, and, after a  
 brief spasm,  
 The indignant spirit cast its mortal  
 garment  
 Among the slain—dead earth upon  
 the earth! [ways,  
 So these survivors, each by different  
 Some strange, all sudden, none dis-  
 honourable.  
 Met in triumphant death; and when  
 our army  
 Closed in, while yet wonder, and awe,  
 and shame  
 Held back the base hyænas of the  
 battle  
 That feed upon the dead and fly the  
 living,  
 One rose out of the chaos of the slain;  
 And if it were a corpse which some  
 dread spirit  
 Of the old saviours of the land we rule  
 Had lifted in its anger, wandering by;  
 Or if there burned within the dying  
 man  
 Unquenchable disdain of death, and  
 faith  
 Creating what it feigned;—I cannot  
 tell:  
 But he cried, "Phantoms of the free,  
 we come!  
 Armies of the Eternal, ye who strike  
 To dust the citadels of sanguine kings,  
 And shake the souls throned on their  
 stony hearts,  
 And thaw their frost-work diadems  
 like dew;—  
 O ye who float around this clime, and  
 weave  
 The garment of the glory which it  
 wears;  
 Whose fame, though earth betray the  
 dust it clasped,  
 Lies sepulchred in monumental  
 thought;—  
 Progenitors of all that yet is great,  
 Ascribe to your bright senate, O ac-  
 cept  
 In your high ministrations, us, your  
 sons—  
 Us first, and the more glorious yet to  
 come!  
 And ye, weak conquerors! giants who  
 look pale  
 When the crushed worm rebels be-  
 neath your tread—  
 The vultures, and the dogs, your pen-  
 sioners tame,  
 Are overgorged; but, like oppressors,  
 still  
 They crave the relic of Destruction's  
 feast.  
 The exhalations and the thirsty winds  
 Are sick with blood; the dew is foul  
 with death—  
 Heaven's light is quenched in slaugh-  
 ter: Thus where'er  
 Upon your camps, cities, or towers,  
 or fleets,  
 The obscene birds the reeking rem-  
 nants cast  
 Of these dead limbs, upon your  
 streams and mountains,  
 Upon your fields, your gardens, and  
 your house-tops,  
 Where'er the winds shall creep, or the  
 clouds fly,  
 Or the dews fall, or the angry sun look  
 down  
 With poisoned light—Famine, and  
 Pestilence,  
 And Panic, shall wage war upon our  
 side!  
 Nature from all her boundaries is  
 moved  
 Against ye: Time has found ye light  
 as foam.

The earth rebels ; and Good and Evil  
stake

Their empire o'er the unborn world  
of men

On this one cast—but ere the die be  
thrown,

The renovated genius of our race,  
Proud umpire of the impious game,  
descends

A seraph-winged Victory, bestriding  
The tempest of the Omnipotence of  
God,

Which sweeps all things to their ap-  
pointed doom,

And you to oblivion !"—More he  
would have said,

But—

*Mahmud.* Died—as thou shouldst  
ere thy lips had painted  
Their ruin in the hues of our success.  
A rebel's crime, gilt with a rebels  
tongue ?

Your heart is Greek, Hassan.

*Hassan.* It may be so :  
A spirit not my own wrenched me  
within,

And I have spoken words I fear and  
hate ;

Yet would I die for—

*Mahmud.* Live ! O live ! out-  
live

Me and this sinking empire :—but the  
fleet—

*Hassan.* Alas !

*Mahmud.* The fleet which, like  
a flock of clouds

Chased by the wind, flies the insur-  
gent banner.

Our winged castles from their mer-  
chant ships !

Our myriads before their weak pirate  
bands !

Our arms before their chains ! Our  
years of empire

Before their centuries of servile fear !  
Death is awake ! Repulsed on the  
waters,

They own no more the thunder-bear-  
ing banner

Of Mahmud ; but like hounds of a  
base breed,

Gorge from a stranger's hand, and  
rend their master.

*Hassan.* Latmos, and Ampelos, and  
Phanae, saw

The wreck—

*Mahmud.* The caves of the  
Icarian isles

Hold each to the other in loud mock-  
ery,

And with the tongue as of a thousand  
echoes

First of the sea-convulsing fight—and  
then—

Thou dardest to speak—senseless are  
the mountains,

Interpret thou their voice !

*Hassan.* My presence bore  
A part in that day's shame. The  
Grecian fleet

Bore down at day-break from the  
North, and hung

As multitudinous on the ocean line  
As cranes upon the cloudless Thracian  
wind.

Our squadron, convoying ten thou-  
sand men,

Was stretching towards Nauplia when  
the battle

Was kindled.—

First through the hail of our artillery  
The agile Hydriote barks with press of  
sail

Dashed :—ship to ship, cannon to  
cannon, man

To man, were grappled in the em-  
brace of war,

Inextricable but by death or victory.  
The tempest of the raging fight con-  
vulsed

To its crystalline depths that stain-  
less sea,

And shook heaven's roof of golden  
morning clouds

Poised on an hundred azure moun-  
tain-isles.

In the brief trances of the artillery,  
One cry from the destroyed and the  
destroyer

Rose, and a cloud of desolation wrapt  
The unforeseen event, till the north  
wind

Sprung from the sea, lifting the heavy  
veil

Of battle-smoke—then victory—vic-  
tory !

For, as we thought, three frigates from  
Algiers

Bore down from Naxos to our aid, but  
soon

The abhorred Cross glimmered behind,  
before,

**Messenger.** Your Sublime Highness,  
that Christian hound, the Muscovite  
ambassador.

*Second Messenger.* Nauplia, Tri-  
polizza, Mothon, Athens,  
Navarin, Artas, Monembasia,  
Corinth and Thees, are carried by  
assault ;  
And every Islamite who made his  
dogs  
Fat with the flesh of Galilean slaves,  
Passed at the edge of the sword : the  
lust of blood,  
Which made our warriors drunk, is  
quenched in death ;  
But like a fiery plague breaks out  
anew  
In deeds which make the Christian  
cause look pale  
In its own light. The garrison of  
Patras  
Has store but for ten days, nor is there  
hope

But from the Briton ; at once slave  
and tyrant,  
His wishes still are weaker than his  
fears ;  
Or he would sell what faith may yet  
remain  
From the oaths broke in Genoa and  
in Norway ;  
And if you buy him not, your trea-  
sury  
Is empty even of promises—his own  
coin.  
The freeman of a western poet chief  
Holds Attica with seven thousand  
rebels,  
And has beat back the pacha of Negro-  
pont ;  
The aged Ali sits in Yanina,  
A crownless metaphor of empire ;  
His name, that shadow of his withered  
might,  
Holds our besieging army like a spell  
In prey to famine, pest, and mutiny :  
He, bastioned in his citadel, looks  
forth  
Joyless upon the sapphire lake that  
mirrors  
The ruins of the city where he reigned  
Childless and sceptreless. The Greek  
has reaped  
The costly harvest his own blood  
matured,  
Not the sower, Ali—who has bought  
a truce  
From Ypsilanti, with ten camel-loads  
Of Indian gold.

*Enter a Third Messenger.*

*Mahmud.* What more ?

*Third Messenger.* The Christian  
tribes

Of Lebanon and the Syrian wilderness  
Are in revolt—Damascus, Hems,  
Aleppo,

Tremble ;—the Arab menaces Mc-  
dina ;

The Ethiop has entrenched himself  
in Sennaar,

And keeps the Egyptian rebel well  
employed,

Who denies homage, claims invest-  
ture

As price of tardy aid. Persia de-  
mands

The cities on the Tigris, and the Geor-  
gians

Refuse their living tribute, Crete and  
Cyprus,

Like mountain-twins that from each  
other's veins

Catch the volcano-fire and earthquake  
spasm,

Shake in the general fever. Through  
the city,

Like birds before a storm, the San-  
tons shriek,

And prophesyings horrible and new  
Are heard among the crowd ; that sea  
of men

Sleeps on the wrecks it made, breath-  
less and still.

A Dervise, learned in the Koran,  
preaches

That it is written, how the sins of  
Islam

Must raise up a destroyer even now.  
The Greeks expect a Saviour from the  
west ;

Who shall not come, men say, in  
clouds and glory,

But in the omnipresence of that spirit  
In which all live and are. Ominous  
signs

Are blazoned broadly on the noon-  
day sky ;

One saw a red cross stamped upon the  
sun ;

It has rained blood ; and monstrous  
births declare

The secret wrath of Nature and her  
Lord.

The army encamped upon the Cydaris  
Was roused last night by the alarm of  
battle,

And saw two hosts conflicting in the  
air,—

The shadows doubtless of the unborn  
time,

Cast on the mirror of the night. While  
yet

The fight hung balanced, there arose  
a storm

Which swept the phantoms from  
among the stars.

At the third watch the spirit of the  
plague

Was heard abroad flapping among  
the tents :

Those who relieved watch found the  
sentinels dead.

The last news from the camp is, that a  
thousand

Have sickened, and—

*Enter a Fourth Messenger.*

*Mahmud.* And thou, pale ghost,  
dim shadow

Of some untimely rumour, speak!

*Fourth Messenger.* One comes  
Fainting with toil, covered with foam  
and blood ;

He stood, he says, upon Cleonit's  
Promontory, which o'erlooks the isles  
that groan

Under the Briton's frown, and all  
their waters

Then trembling in the splendour of  
the moon ;

When, as the wandering clouds un-  
veiled or hid,

Her boundless light, he saw two ad-  
verse fleets

Stalk through the night in the hori-  
zon's glimmer,

Mingling fierce thunders and sul-  
phureous gleams,

And smoke which strangled every in-  
fant wind

That soothed the silver clouds  
through the deep air.

At length the battle slept, but the  
sirocco

Awoke, and drove his flock of thun-  
der-clouds

Over the sea-horizon, blotting out  
All objects—save that in the faint  
moon-glimpse

He saw, or dreamed he saw the Turk-  
ish admiral

And two, the loftiest, of our ships of  
war,

With the bright image of that Queen  
of Heaven,

Who hid, perhaps, her face for grief,  
reversed ;

And the abhorred Cross—

*Enter an Attendant.*

*Attendant.* Your sublime High-  
ness,

The Jew, who—

*Mahmud.* Could not come more  
seasonably :

Bid him attend. I'll hear no more !  
too long

We gaze on danger through the mist of  
fear.

And multiply upon our shattered  
hopes

The images of ruin. Come what will !  
To-morrow and to-morrow are as  
lamps

Set in our path to light us to the edge,  
Through rough and smooth ; nor can  
we suffer aught

Which he inflicts not in whose hand  
we are. *[Exeunt.]*

SEMICHORUS I.

Would I were the winged cloud  
Of a tempest swift and loud !

I would scorn

The smile of morn,

And the wave where the moon-rise is  
born !

I would leave

The spirits of eve

A shroud for the corpse of the day to  
weave

From other threads than mine !

Bask in the blue noon divine

Who would, not I.

SEMICHORUS II.

Whither to fly ?

SEMICHORUS I.

Where the rocks that gird th' Ægean  
Echo to the battle pæan

Of the free—

I would flee

A tempestuous herald of victory !

My golden rain

For the Grecian slain

Should mingle in tears with the  
bloody main ;

And my solemn thunder-knell

Should ring to the world the  
passing-bell

Of tyranny !

SEMICHORUS.

Ah king ! wilt thou chain

The rack and the rain ?

Wilt thou fetter the lightning and  
hurricane ?

The storms are free,

But we—

CHORUS.

O Slavery ! thou frost of the world's  
prime,

Killing its flowers and leaving its  
thorns bare,

Thy touch has stamped these limbs  
with crime,  
These brows thy branding garland  
bear ;  
But the free heart, the impassive  
soul,  
Scorn thy control !

SEMICHORUS I.  
"Let there be light !" said Liberty ;  
And like sunrise from the sea,  
Athens arose !—Around her born,  
Shone like mountains in the morn,  
Glorious states ;—and are they  
now  
Ashes, wrecks, oblivion ?

SEMICHORUS II.  
Go  
Where Thermæ and Asopus swal-  
lowed  
Persia, as the sand does foam.  
Deluge upon deluge followed,  
Discord, Macedon, and Rome :  
And, lastly, thou !

SEMICHORUS I.  
Temples and towers,  
Citadels and marts, and they  
Who live and die there, have been  
ours,  
And may be thine, and must decay ;  
But Greece and her foundations are  
Built below the tide of war,  
Based on the crystalline sea  
Of thought and its eternity ;  
Her citizens, imperial spirits,  
Rule the present from the past,  
On all this world of men inherits  
Their seal is set.

SEMICHORUS II.  
Hear ye the blast,  
Whose Orphic thunder thrilling  
calls  
From ruin her Titanian walls ?  
Whose spirit shakes the sapless  
bones  
Of Slavery ? Argos, Corinth,  
Crete,  
Hear, and from their mountain  
thrones  
The dæmons and the nymphs  
repeat  
The harmony.

SEMICHORUS I.  
I hear ! I hear !

SEMICHORUS II.  
The world's eyeless charioteer,  
Destiny, is hurrying by !  
What faith is crushed, what empire  
bleeds  
Beneath her earthquake-footed  
steeds ?  
What eagle-winged victory sits  
At her right hand ? what shadow flits  
Before ? what splendour rolls be-  
hind ?  
Ruin and Renovation cry,  
"Who but we ?"

SEMICHORUS I.  
I hear ! I hear !  
The hiss as of a rushing wind,  
The roar as of an ocean foaming,  
The thunder as of earthquake coming  
I hear ! I hear !  
The crash as of an empire falling,  
The shrieks as of a people calling  
"Mercy ! Mercy !" —How they thrill !  
Then a shout of " Kill ! kill ! kill !"  
And then a small still voice, thus—

SEMICHORUS II.  
For  
Revenge and wrong bring forth their  
kind,  
The foul cubs like their parents are,  
Their den is in their guilty mind,  
And Conscience feeds them with  
despair.

SEMICHORUS I.  
In sacred Athens, near the fane  
Of wisdom, Pity's altar stood ;  
Serve not the unknown God in vain,  
But pay that broken shrine again  
Love for hate, and tears for blood.

Enter MAHMUD and AHASUERUS.

Mahmud. Thou art a man, thou  
sayest, even as we—  
Ahasuerus. No more !  
Mahmud. But raised above thy  
fellow-men  
By thought, as I by power.  
Ahasuerus. Thou sayest so.  
Mahmud. Thou art an adept in the  
difficult lore

Of Greek and Frank philosophy ; thou  
numberest  
The flowers, and thou measur'st the  
stars ;  
Thou severest element from element ;  
Thy spirit is present in the past, and  
sees  
The birth of this old world through all  
its cycles  
Of desolation and of loveliness ;  
And when man was not, and how man  
became  
The monarch and the slave of this low  
sphere,  
And all its narrow circles—it is much.  
I honour thee, and would be what  
thou art  
Were I not what I am ; but the un-  
born hour, \*  
Cradled in fear and hope, conflicting  
storms,  
Who shall unveil ? Nor thou, nor I,  
nor any  
Mighty or wise. I apprehend not  
What thou hast taught me, but I now  
perceive  
That thou art no interpreter of  
dreams ; [God,  
Thou dost not own that art, device, or  
Can make the future present—let it  
come !  
Moreover thou disdainest us and ours !  
Thou art as God, whom thou contem-  
platest.  
*Ahasuerus*. Disdain thee ?—not  
the worm beneath my feet !  
The Fathomless has care for meaner  
things  
Than thou canst dream, and has made  
pride for those  
Who would be what they may not, or  
would seem  
That which they are not. Sultan !  
talk no more  
Of thee and me, the future and the  
past ;  
But look on that which cannot change  
—the One  
The unborn, and the undying. Earth  
and ocean,  
Space, and the isles of life or light that  
gem  
The sapphire floods of interstellar  
air,  
This firmament pavilioned upon  
chaos,

With all its cressets of immortal fire,  
Whose outwall, bastioned impreg-  
nably  
Against the escape of boldest  
thoughts, repels them  
As Calpe the Atlantic clouds—this  
whole  
Of suns, and worlds, and men, and  
beasts, and flowers,  
With all the silent or tempestuous  
workings  
By which they have been, are, of  
cease to be,  
Is but a vision ;—all that it inherits  
Are motes of a sick eye, bubbles, and  
dreams ;  
Thought is its cradle and its grave, nor  
less  
The future and the past are idle  
shadows  
Of thought's eternal flight—they have  
no being ;  
Nought is but that it feels itself to be.  
*Mahmud*. What meanest thou ?  
thy words stream like a tempest  
Of dazzling mist within my brain—  
they shake  
The earth on which I stand, and hang  
like night  
On Heaven above me. What can  
they avail ?  
They cast on all things, surest, bright-  
est, best,  
Doubt, insecurity, astonishment.  
*Ahasuerus*. Mistake me not ! All is  
contained in each.  
Dodona's forest to an acorn's cup  
Is that which has been or will be, to  
that  
Which is—the absent to the present.  
Thought  
Alone, and its quick elements, Will,  
Passion,  
Reason, Imagination, cannot die ;  
They are what that which they re-  
gard appears,  
The stuff whence mutability can  
weave  
All that it hath dominion o'er,—  
worlds, worms,  
Empires, and superstitions. What  
has thought  
To do with time, or place, or circum-  
stance ?  
Wouldst thou behold the future ?—  
ask and have !



Knock and it shall be opened—look,  
and lo !

The coming age is shadowed on the  
past,

As on a glass.

*Mahmud.* Wild, wilder thoughts  
convulse

My spirit—Did not Mahomet the  
Second

Win Stamboul ?

*Ahasuerus.* Thou wouldst ask that  
giant spirit

The written fortunes of thy house and  
faith.

Thou wouldst cite one out of the  
grave to tell

How what was born in blood must die.

*Mahmud.* Thy words

Have power on me ! I see—

*Ahasuerus.* What hearest thou ?

*Mahmud.* A far whisper—

Terrible silence.

*Ahasuerus.* What succeeds ?

*Mahmud.* The sound

As of the assault of an imperial city,

The hiss of inextinguishable fire,

The roar of giant cannon ;—the earth-  
quaking

Fall of vast bastions and precipitous  
towers,

The shock of crags shot from strange  
engin'ry,

The clash of wheels, and clang of  
armed hoofs,

And crash of brazen mail, as of the  
wreck

Of adamantine mountains—the mad  
blast

Of trumpets, and the neigh of raging  
steeds,

And shrieks of women whose thrill  
jas the blood,

And one sweet laugh, most horrible  
to hear,

As of a joyous infant waked, and play-  
ing

With its dead mother's breast ; and  
now more loud

The mingled battle-cry—ha ! hear I  
not

'Εν τούτω πλην. Allah-illah-Allah !

*Ahasuerus.* The sulphureous mist  
is raised—thou seest—

*Mahmud.* A chasm,  
As of two mountains, in the wall of  
Stamboul ;

And in that ghastly breach the Islami-  
tes,

Like giants on the ruins of a world,  
Stand in the light of sunrise. In the  
dust

Glimmers a kingless diadem, and one  
Of regal port has cast himself beneath  
The stream of war. Another, proud-  
ly clad

In golden arms, spurs a Tartarian barb  
Into the gap, and with his iron mace  
Directs the torrent of that tide of men,  
And seems—he is—Mahomet !

*Ahasuerus.* What thou seest  
Is but the ghost of thy forgotten  
dream ;

A dream itself, yet less, perhaps than  
that

Thou call'st reality. Thou mayst be-  
hold

How cities, on which empire sleeps  
enthroned,

Bow their towered crests to muta-  
bility.

Poised by the flood, e'en on the height  
thou holdest,

Thou mayst now learn how the full  
tide of power

Ebbs to its depths.—Inheritor of  
glory,

Conceived in darkness, born in blood,  
and nourished

With tears and toil, thou seest the  
mortal throes

Of that whose birth was but the same.  
The Past

Now stands before thee like an Incar-  
nation

Of the To-come ; yet wouldst thou  
commune with

That portion of thyself which was ere  
thou

Didst start for this brief race whose  
crown is death ;

Dissolve with that strong faith and  
fervent passion

Which called it from the uncreated  
deep,

Yon cloud of war with its tempestu-  
ous phantoms

Of raging death ; and draw with  
mighty will

The imperial shade hither.

*Mahmud.* [Exit AHASUERUS,  
Approach !

*Phantom.*

I come

Thence whither thou must go ! The grave is fitter  
 To take the living, than give up the dead ;  
 Yet has thy faith prevailed, and I am here.  
 The heavy fragments of the power which fell  
 When I arose, like shapeless crags and clouds,  
 Hang round my throne on the abyss, and voices  
 Of strange lament soothe my supreme repose,  
 Wailing for glory never to return.—  
 A later Empire nods in its decay ;  
 The autumn of a greener faith is come, And wolfish change, like winter, howls to strip  
 The foliage in which Fame, the eagle, built  
 Her ærie, while Dominion whelped below.  
 The storm is in its branches, and the frost  
 Is on its leaves, and the blank deep expects  
 Oblivion on oblivion, spoil on spoil, Ruin on ruin : thou art slow, my son ;  
 The Anarchs of the world of darkness keep  
 A throne for thee, round which thine empire lies  
 Boundless and mute ; and for thy subjects thou,  
 Like us, shall rule the ghosts of murdered life,  
 The phantoms of the powers who rule thee now—  
 Mutinous passions and conflicting fears,  
 And hopes that sate themselves on dust and die,  
 Stript of their mortal strength, as thou of thine.  
 Islam must fall, but we will reign together  
 Over its ruins in the world of death :—  
 And if the trunk be dry, yet shall the seed  
 Unfold itself even in the shape of that  
 Which gathers birth in its decay.  
 Woe ! woe !  
 To the weak people tangled in the grasp  
 Of its last spasms,

*Mahmud.* Spirit, woe to all !  
 Woe to the wronged and the avenger !  
 Woe  
 To the destroyer, woe to the destroyed !  
 Woe to the dupe, and woe to the deceiver !  
 Woe to the oppressed and woe to the oppressor !  
 Woe both to those that suffer and inflict ;  
 Those who are born, and those who die ! But say,  
 Imperial shadow of the thing I am, When, how, by whom, Destruction must accomplish  
 Her consummation ?  
*Phantom.* Ask the cold pale Hour,  
 Rich in reversion of impending death, When *he* shall fall upon whose ripe grey hairs  
 Sit care, and sorrow, and infirmity—  
 The weight which Crime, whose wings are plumed with years,  
 Leaves in his flight from ravaged heart to heart  
 Over the heads of men, under which burthen  
 They bow themselves unto the grave : fond wretch !  
 He leans upon his crutch, and talks of years  
 To come, and how in hours of youth renewed  
 He will renew lost joys, and—  
*Voice without.* Victory ! victory !  
 [The Phantom vanishes.  
*Mahmud.* What sound of the importunate earth has broken  
 My mighty trance ?  
*Voice without.* Victory ! victory !  
*Mahmud.* Weak lightning before darkness ! poor faint smile  
 Of dying Islam ! Voice which art the response  
 Of hollow weakness ! Do I wake and live ?  
 Were there such things ? or may the unquiet brain,  
 Vexed by the wise mad talk of the old Jew,  
 Have shaped itself these shadows of its fear ?  
 It matters not !—for nought we see or dream,

Possess, or lose, or grasp at, can be worth  
 More than it gives or teaches. Come what may,  
 The future must become the past, and I  
 As they were, to whom once this present hour,  
 This gloomy crag of time to which I cling,  
 Seemed an Elysian isle of peace and joy  
 Never to be attained.—I must rebuke  
 This drunkenness of triumph ere it die,  
 And dying, bring despair.—Victory!  
 —poor slaves!

[Exit MAHMUD.]

*Voice without.* Shout in the jubilee  
 of death! The Greeks  
 Are as a brood of lions in the net,  
 Round which the kingly hunters of  
 the earth  
 Stand smiling. Anarchs, ye whose  
 daily food  
 Are curses, groans, and gold, the fruit  
 of death,  
 From Thule to the girdle of the world,  
 Come, feast! the board groans with  
 the flesh of men—  
 The cup is foaming with a nation's  
 blood,  
 Famine and thirst await: eat, drink,  
 and die!

SEMICHORUS I.

Victorious Wrong, with vulture  
 scream,  
 Salutes the risen sun, pursues the fly-  
 ing day!  
 I saw her ghastly as a tyrant's  
 dream,  
 Perch on the trembling pyramid of  
 night,  
 Beneath which earth and all her  
 realms pavilioned lay  
 In visions of the dawning undelight.  
 Who shall impede her flight?  
 Who rob her of her prey?

*Voice without.* Victory! victory!  
 Russia's famished eagles  
 Dare not to prey beneath the Cres-  
 cent's light.  
 Impale the remnant of the Greeks!  
 despoil!

Violate! make their flesh cheaper  
 than dust!

SEMICHORUS II.

Thou voice which art  
 The herald of the ill in splendour  
 hid!

Thou echo of the hollow heart  
 Of monarchy, bear me to thine  
 abode

When desolation flashes o'er a  
 world destroyed,  
 Oh! bear me to those isles of jagged  
 cloud

Which float like mountains on  
 the earthquakes, 'mid  
 The momentary oceans of the light-  
 ning;

Or to some toppling promon-  
 tory proud  
 Of solid tempest, whose black  
 pyramid,

Riven, overhangs the founts in-  
 tensely brightening  
 Of those dawn-tinted deluges  
 of fire

Before their waves expire,  
 When heaven and earth are light,  
 and only light  
 In the thunder-night!

*Voice without.* Victory! victory!  
 Austria, Russia, England,  
 And that tame serpent, that poor  
 shadow, France,  
 Cry peace, and that means death when  
 monarchs speak.  
 Ho, there! bring torches, sharpen  
 those red stakes!  
 These chains are light, fitter for slaves  
 and poisoners  
 Than Greeks. Kill! plunder! burn!  
 let none remain.

SEMICHORUS I.

Alas for Liberty!  
 If numbers, wealth, or unfulfill-  
 ing years,  
 Or fate, can quell the free;  
 Alas for Virtue! when  
 Torments, or contumely, or the  
 sneers  
 Of erring judging men  
 Can break the heart where it  
 abides,

Alas ! if Love, whose smile makes  
 this obscure world splendid  
 Can change, with its false  
 times and tides,  
 Like hope and terror—  
 Alas for Love !  
 And Truth, who wanderest lone and  
 unbefriended,  
 If thou canst veil thy lie-consum-  
 ing mirror  
 Before the dazzled eyes of  
 Error.  
 Alas for thee ! Image of the  
 Above.

SEMICHORUS II.

Repulse, with plumes from conquest  
 torn,  
 Led the ten thousand from the limits  
 of the morn  
 Through many an hostile Anarchy !  
 At length they wept aloud and cried,  
 "The sea ! the sea !"  
 Through exile, persecution, and  
 despair,  
 Rome was, and young Atlantis  
 shall become  
 The wonder, or the terror, or the  
 tomb  
 Of all whose step wakes power lulled  
 in her savage lair  
 But Greece was as a hermit child,  
 Whose fairest thoughts and limbs  
 were built  
 To woman's growth, by dreams so  
 mild  
 She knew not pain or guilt ;  
 And now, O Victory, blush ! and Em-  
 pire, tremble,  
 When ye desert the free !  
 If Greece must be  
 A wreck, yet shall its fragments re-  
 assemble,  
 And build themselves again impreg-  
 nably  
 In a diviner clime,  
 To Amphionic music, on some Cap:  
 sublime,  
 Which frowns above the idle foam of  
 Time.

SEMICHORUS I.

Let the tyrants rule the desert they  
 have made ;  
 Let the free possess the paradise  
 they claim ;

Be the fortune of our fierce oppressors  
 weighed  
 With our ruin, our resistance, and  
 our name !

SEMICHORUS II.

Our dead shall be the seed of their  
 decay,  
 Our survivors be the shadows of  
 their pride,  
 Our adversity a dream to pass away—  
 Their dishonour a remembrance to  
 abide !

*Voice without.* Victory ! Victory !

The bought Briton sends  
 The keys of ocean to the Islamite.  
 Now shall the blazon of the Cross be  
 veiled,  
 And British skill directing Othman  
 might,  
 Thunder-strike rebel victory. O  
 keep holy  
 This jubilee of unrevenged blood !  
 Kill ! crush ! despoil ! Let not a  
 Greek escape !

SEMICHORUS I.

Darkness has dawned in the East  
 On the noon of time :  
 The death-birds descend to their  
 feast,  
 From the hungry clime.  
 Let Freedom and Peace flee far  
 To a sunnier strand,  
 And follow Love's folding star !  
 To the Evening land !

SEMICHORUS II.

The young moon has fed  
 Her exhausted horn  
 With the sunset's fire :  
 The weak day is dead,  
 But the night is not born ;  
 And, like loveliness panting with  
 wild desire,  
 While it trembles with fear and de-  
 light,  
 Hesperus flies from awakening  
 night,  
 And pants in its beauty and speed  
 with light  
 Fast-flashing, soft and bright,  
 Thou beacon of love ! thou lamp of  
 the free !  
 Guide us far, far away,

To climes where now, veiled by the  
ardour of day,  
Thou art hidden  
From waves on which weary noon  
Faints in her summer swoon,  
Between kingless continents, sin-  
less as Eden,  
Around mountains and islands invio-  
lably  
Pranked on the sapphire sea.

## SEMICHORUS I.

Through the sunset of hope,  
Like the shapes of a dream,  
What Paradise islands of glory  
gleam  
Beneath Heaven's cope.  
Their shadows more clear float by—  
The sound of their oceans, the light of  
their sky,  
The music and fragrance their soli-  
tudes breathe,  
Burst like morning on dreams, or like  
Heaven on death,  
Through the walls of our prison ;  
And Greece, which was dead, is  
arisen !

## CHORUS.

The world's great age begins anew,  
The golden years return,  
The earth doth like a snake renew  
Her winter weeds outworn :  
Heaven smiles, and faiths and em-  
pires gleam  
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter Hellas rears its moun-  
tains  
From waves serener far ;  
A new Peneus rolls its fountains  
Against the Morning Star.  
Where fairer Tempes bloom, there  
sleep  
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,  
Fraught with a later prize ;  
Another Orpheus sings again,  
And loves, and weeps, and dies ;  
A new Ulysses leaves once more  
Calypso for his native shore.

O write no more the tale of Troy,  
If earth Death's scroll must be !  
Nor mix with Laian rage the joy  
Which dawns upon the free :  
Although a subtler Sphinx renew  
Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise,  
And to remoter time  
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,  
The splendour of its prime ;  
And leave, if nought so bright may  
live,  
All earth can take or heaven can  
give.

Saturn and Love their long repose  
Shall burst, more bright and good  
Than all who fell, than One who  
rose,  
Than many unsubdued :  
Not gold, not blood, their altar  
dowers,  
But votive tears, and symbol flow-  
ers.

O cease ! must hate and death  
return ?  
Cease ! must men kill and die ?  
Cease ! drain not to its dregs the  
urn  
Of bitter prophecy.  
The world is weary of the past,  
O might it die or rest at last !

<sup>1</sup> See Notes at the end of the volume.

ŒDIPUS TYRANNUS  
OR, SWELLFOOT THE TYRANT  
A TRAGEDY IN TWO ACTS

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL DORIC

———Choose Reform or Civil War,  
When through thy streets, instead of hare with dogs,  
A CONSORT-QUEEN shall hunt a KING with hogs,  
Riding on the IONIAN MINOTAUR.

ADVERTISEMENT

THIS Tragedy is one of a triad, or system of three Plays (an arrangement according to which the Greeks were accustomed to connect their Dramatic representations), elucidating the wonderful and appalling fortunes of the SWELLFOOT dynasty. It was evidently written by some *learned Theban*, and from its characteristic dulness, apparently before the duties on the importation of *Attic salt* had been repealed by the Bœotarchs. The tenderness with which he beats the PIGS proves him to have been a *sus Bœotia*; possibly *Epicuri de grege Porcus*; for, as the poet observes,

"A fellow feeling makes us wond'rous kind."

No liberty has been taken with the translation of this remarkable piece of antiquity, except the suppressing a seditious and blasphemous chorus of the Pigs and Bulls at the last act. The word *Hoydipouse* (or more properly *Edipus*) has been rendered literally *SWELLFOOT*, without its having been conceived necessary to determine whether a swelling of the hind or the fore feet of the Swinish Monarch is particularly indicated.

Should the remaining portions of this Tragedy be found, entitled, "*Swellfoot in Angaria*," and "*Charitè*," the Translator might be tempted to give them to the reading Public.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

TYRANT SWELLFOOT, *King of Thebes*  
IONA TAURINA, *his Queen*  
MAMMON, *Arch-Priest of Famine*  
PURGANAX }  
DAKRY } *Wizards, Ministers of*  
LAOCTONOS } *SWELLFOOT*

THE GADFLY  
THE LEECH  
THE RAT  
THE MINOTAUR  
MOSES, *the Sow-gelder*  
SOLOMON, *the Porkman*

ZEPHANIAH, *Pig-butcher*

CHORUS of the Swinish Multitude.—*Guards, Attendants, Priests, etc., etc.*

SCENE—*Thebes*

ACT I

SCENE I.—*A magnificent Temple, built of thigh-bones and death's-heads, and tiled with scalps. Over the Altar the statue of Famine, veiled; a number of boars, sows, and sucking-pigs, crowned with thistle, sham-rock, and oak, sitting on the steps,*

*and clinging round the Altar of the Temple.*

*Enter SWELLFOOT, in his royal robes, without perceiving the PIGS.*

*Swellfoot. Thou supreme Goddess! by whose power divine*

*These graceful limbs are clothed in proud array*

[*He contemplates himself with satisfaction.*]

Of gold and purple, and this kingly  
paunch  
Swells like a sail before a favouring  
breeze,  
And these most sacred nether promon-  
tories  
Lie satisfied with layers of fat ; and  
these  
Bœotian cheeks, like Egypt's Pyra-  
mid,  
(Nor with less toil were their founda-  
tions laid, <sup>1</sup>)  
Sustain the cone of my untroubled  
brain,  
That point, the emblem of a point-  
less nothing !  
Thou to whom Kings and laurelled  
Emperors,  
Radical butchers, Paper-money-mil-  
lers,  
Bishops and deacons, and the entire  
army  
Of those fat martyrs to the persecu-  
tion  
Of stifling turtle-soup, and brandy-  
devils,  
Offer their secret vows ! Thou plen-  
teous Ceres  
Of their Eleusis, hail ! [eigh !  
*The Swine.* Eigh ! eigh ! eigh !  
*Swellfoot.* Ha ! what are ye,  
Who, crowned with leaves devoted to  
the Furies,  
Cling round this sacred shrine ?  
*Swine.* Aigh ! aigh ! aigh !  
*Swellfoot.* What, ye that are  
The very beasts that offered at her  
altar  
With blood and groans, salt-cake, and  
fat, and inwards,  
Ever propitiate her reluctant will  
When taxes are withheld ?  
*Swine.* Ugh ! ugh ! ugh !  
*Swellfoot.* What ! ye who grub  
With filthy snouts my red potatoes up  
In Allan's rushy bog ? Who eat the  
oats  
Up, from my cavalry in the Hebrides ?  
Who swill the hog-wash soup my  
cooks digest

<sup>1</sup> See universal history for an account of the number of people who died and the immense consumption of garlic by the wretched Egyptians, who made a sepulchre for the name as well as the bodies of their tyrants.

From bones, and rags, and scraps of  
shoe-leather,  
Which should be given to cleaner pigs  
than you ?

THE SWINE.—SEMICHORUS I.

The same, alas ! the same ;  
Though only now the name  
Of pig remains to me.

SEMICHORUS II.

If 'twere your kingly will  
Us wretched swine to kill,  
What should we yield to  
thee ?

*Swellfoot.* Why skin and bones, and  
some few hairs for mortar.

CHORUS OF SWINE.

I have heard your Laureate sing,  
That pity was a royal thing ;  
Under your mighty ancestors, we  
pigs  
Were bless'd as nightingales on  
myrtle sprigs,  
Or grasshoppers that live on noon-  
day dew,  
And sung, old annals tell, as sweetly  
too !  
But now our sties are fallen in, we  
catch  
The murrain and the mange, the  
scab and itch ;  
Sometimes your royal dogs tear  
down our thatch,  
And then we seek the shelter of a  
ditch ;  
Hog-wash or grains, or ruta-baga,  
none  
Has yet been ours since your reign  
began.

FIRST SOW.

My pigs, 'tis in vain to tug !

SECOND SOW.

I could almost eat my litter !

FIRST PIG.

I suck, but no milk will come  
from the dug.

SECOND PIG.

Our skin and our bones would be  
bitter.

THE BOARS.

We fight for this rag of greasy rug,  
Though a trough of wash would be  
fitter.

SEMICHORUS.

Happier swine were they than we,  
Drowned in the Gadarean sea—  
I wish that pity would drive out the  
devils

Which in your royal bosom hold  
their revels,  
And sink us in the waves of your com-  
passion !

Alas ! the pigs are an unhappy  
nation !

Now if your majesty would have  
our bristles

To bind your mortar with, or fill  
our colons

With rich blood, or make brawn  
out of our gristles,

In policy—ask else your royal  
Solons—

You ought to give us hog-wash and  
clean straw,

And sties well thatched ; besides,  
it is the law !

*Swellfoot.* This is sedition, and rank  
blasphemy !

Ho ! there, my guards !

*Enter a GUARD.*

*Guard.* Your sacred Majesty ?

*Swellfoot.* Call in the Jews, Solo-  
mon the court porkman,

Moses the sow-gelder, and Zephaniah  
the hog-butcher.

*Guard.* They are in waiting, sire.

*Enter SOLOMON, MOSES, and  
ZEPHANIAH.*

*Swellfoot.* Out with your knife, old  
Moses, and spay those sows,

[*The Pigs run about in consternation.*

That load the earth with pigs ; cut  
close and deep.

Moral restraint I see has no effect,  
Nor prostitution, nor our own example,  
Starvation, typhus fever, war, nor  
prison—

This was the art which the arch-priest  
of Famine

Hinted at in his charge to the Theban  
clergy—

Cut close and deep, good Moses.

*Moses.* Let your majesty

Keep the boars quiet, else—

*Swellfoot.* Zephaniah, cut

S.P.

That fat hog's throat, the brute seems  
overfed ;

Seditious hunks ! to whine for want  
of grains.

*Zephaniah.* Your sacred majesty,  
he has the dropsy ;—

We shall find pints of hydatids in's  
liver,

He has not half an inch of wholesome  
fat

Upon his carious ribs—

*Swellfoot.* 'Tis all the same,

He'll serve instead of riot-money,  
when

Our murmuring troops bivouac in  
Thebes' streets ;

And January winds, after a day  
Of butchering, will make them relish  
carriion.

Now, Solomon, I'll sell you in a lump  
The whole kit of them.

*Solomon.* Why, your majesty,  
I could not give—

*Swellfoot.* Kill them out of the  
way,

That shall be price enough, and let me  
hear

Their everlasting grunts and whines  
no more !

[*Exeunt, driving in the SWINE.*

*Enter MAMMON, the Arch-Priest ; and  
PURGANAX, Chief of the Council  
of Wizards.*

*Purganax.* The future looks as  
black as death, a cloud,

Dark as the frown of Hell, hangs over  
it—

The troops grow mutinous—the re-  
venue fails—

There's something rotten in us—for  
the level

Of the State slopes, its very bases  
topple ;

The boldest turn their backs upon  
themselves !

*Mammon.* Why what's the matter,  
my dear fellow, now ?

Do the troops mutiny ?—decimate  
some regiments ;

Does money fail ?—come to my mint  
—coin paper,

Till gold be at a discount, and,  
ashamed

To show his bilious face, go purge him-  
self,



In emulation of her vestal whiteness.

*Purganax.* Oh, would that this were all! The oracle!

*Mammon.* Why it was I who spoke that oracle,

And whether I was dead drunk or inspired,

I cannot well remember; nor, in truth, The oracle itself!

*Purganax.* The words went thus:—

"Bœotia, choose reform or civil war! When through the streets, instead of hare with dogs,

A Consort-Queen shall hunt a King with hogs,

Riding on the Ionian Minotaur."

*Mammon.* Now if the oracle had ne'er foretold

This sad alternative, it must arrive, Or not, and so it must now that it has;

And whether I was urged by grace divine,

Or Lesbian liquor to declare these words,

Which must, as all words must, be false or true;

It matters not: for the same power made all,

Oracle, wine, and me and you—or none—

'Tis the same thing. If you knew as much

Of oracles as I do——

*Purganax.* You arch-priests Believe in nothing; if you were to dream

Of a particular number in the lottery, You would not buy the ticket!

*Mammon.* Yet our tickets Are seldom blanks. But what steps have you taken?

For prophecies, when once they get abroad,

Like liars who tell the truth to serve their ends,

Or hypocrites, who, from assuming virtue,

Do the same actions that the virtuous do,

Contrive their own fulfilment. This Iona—

Well—you know what the chaste Pasiphae did,

Wife to that most religious King of Crete,

And still how popular the tale is here; And these dull swine of Thebes boast their descent

From the free Minotaur. You know they still

Call themselves bulls, though thus degenerate;

And everything relating to a bull Is popular and respectable in Thebes:

Their arms are seven bulls in a field gules.

They think their strength consists in eating beef,—

Now there were danger in the precedent

If Queen Iona——

*Purganax.* I have taken good care

That shall not be. I struck the crust o' the earth

With this enchanted rod, and Hell lay bare!

And from a cavern full of ugly shapes, I chose a LEECH, a GADFLY, and a RAT.

The gadfly was the same which Juno sent

To agitate Io,<sup>1</sup> and which Ezechiel<sup>2</sup> mentions

That the Lord whistled for out of the mountains

Of utmost Ethiopia, to torment Mesopotamian Babylon. The beast

Has a loud trumpet like the scarabee; His crooked tail is barbed with many

stings,

Each able to make a thousand wounds, and each

Immedicable; from his convex eyes He sees fair things in many hideous

shapes,

And trumpets all his falsehood to the world.

Like other beetles he is fed on dung— He has eleven feet with which he

crawls,

Trailing a blistering slime; and this foul beast

Has tracked Iona from the Theban limits,

From isle to isle, from city unto city, Urging her flight from the far Cher-  
sonese

<sup>1</sup> The Prometheus Bound of Æschylus.

<sup>2</sup> And the Lord whistled for the gadfly out of Ethiopia, and for the bee out of Egypt, etc.—EZECHIEL.

To fabulous Solyma, and the Ætnean Isle,  
Ortygia, Melite, and Calypso's Rock,  
And the swart tribes of Garamant  
and Fez,  
Æolia and Elysium, and thy shores,  
Parthenope, which now, alas! are  
free!

And through the fortunate Saturnian  
land,  
Into the darkness of the West.

*Mammon.* But if  
This Gadfly should drive Iona hither?

*Purganax.* Gods! what an if! but  
there is my grey RAT; [out  
So thin with want, he can crawl in and  
Of any narrow chink and filthy hole,  
And he shall creep into her dressing-  
room,

And—

*Mammon.* My dear friend, where  
are your wits? as if  
She does not always toast a piece of  
cheese,

And bait the trap? and rats, when  
lean enough

To crawl through such chinks——

*Purganax.* But my LEECH—a leech  
Fit to suck blood, with lubricous  
round rings,

Capaciously expatiative, which make  
His little body like a red balloon,  
As full of blood as that of hydrogen,  
Sucked from men's hearts; insati-  
ably he sucks

And clings and pulls—a horse-leech,  
whose deep maw

The plethoric King Swellfoot could  
not fill,

And who, till full, will cling for ever.

*Mammon.* This  
For Queen Iona might suffice, and  
less;

But 'tis the swinish multitude I fear,  
And in that fear I have——

*Purganax.* Done what?

*Mammon.* Disinherited  
My eldest son Chrysaor, because he  
Attended public meetings, and would  
always

Stand prating there of commerce,  
public faith,

Economy, and unadulterate coin,  
And other topics, ultra-Radical;  
And have entailed my estate, called  
the Fool's Paradise,

And funds, in fairy money, bonds and  
bills,

Upon my accomplished daughter  
Banknotina,

And married her to the Gallows.<sup>1</sup>

*Purganax.* A good match!

*Mammon.* A high connection, *Pur-  
ganax.* The bridegroom

Is of a very ancient family  
Of Hounslow Heath, Tyburn, and the

New Drop,  
And has great influence in both  
Houses;—Oh!

He makes the fondest husband; nay,  
too fond:—

New-married people should not kiss  
in public;—

But the poor souls love one another  
so!

And then my little grandchildren,  
the Gibbets,

Promising children as you ever saw,—  
The young playing at hanging, the

elder learning  
How to hold Radicals. They are well  
taught too,

For every Gibbet says its catechism,  
And reads a select chapter in the

Bible  
Before it goes to play.

[A most tremendous humming is heard.  
*Purganax.* Ha! what do I hear?

*Enter GADFLY.*

*Mammon.* Your Gadfly, as it seems,  
is tired of gadding.

*GADFLY.*

Hum! hum! hum!  
From the lakes of the Alps, and the  
cold grey scalps

Of the mountains, I come!  
Hum! hum! hum!

From Morocco and Fez, and the high  
palaces

Of golden Byzantium;  
From the temples divine of old

Palestine,  
From Athens and Rome,

With a ha! and a hum!  
I come! I come!

All inn-doors and windows  
Were open to me!

<sup>1</sup> "If one should marry a gallows, and beget  
young gibbets, I never saw one so prone."  
CYMBELINE.

I saw all that sin does,  
Which lamps hardly see  
That burn in the night by the cur-  
tained bed,—  
The impudent lamps! for they  
blushed not red.  
Dinging and singing,  
From slumber I rung her,  
Loud as the clank of an iron-  
monger!  
Hum! hum! hum!

Far, far, far,  
With the trump of my lips, and the  
sting at my hips,  
I drove her—afar!  
Far far, far,  
From city to city, abandoned of pity,  
A ship without needle or star;—  
Homeless she past, like a cloud on the  
blast,  
Seeking peace, finding war;—  
She is here in her car,  
From afar, and afar;—  
Hum! hum!

I have stung her and wrung her!  
The venom is working;—  
And if you had hung her  
With canting and quirking,  
She could not be deader than she will  
be soon;—  
I have driven her close to you under  
the moon,  
Night and day, hum! hum! ha!  
I have hummed her and drummed her  
From place to place, till at last I have  
dumbed her.  
Hum! hum! hum!

LEECH.  
I will suck  
Blood or muck!  
The disease of the state is a  
plethory,  
Who so fit to reduce it as I?

RAT.  
I'll stily seize and  
Let blood from her weasand,—  
Creeping through crevice, and chink,  
and cranny,  
With my snaky tail, and my sides so  
scranny.  
*Purganax.* Aroint ye! thou unpro-  
fitable worm!

[To the LEECH.

And thou, dull beetle, get thee back  
to hell! [To the GADFLY.  
To sting the ghosts of Babylonian  
kings,  
And the ox-headed Io.—

SWINE (*within*).  
Ugh, ugh, ugh!  
Hail! Iona the divine,  
We will be no longer swine,  
But bulls with horns and dewlaps

RAT.

For,  
You know, my lord, the Minotaur—  
*Purganax* (*fiercely*). Be silent!  
get to hell! or I will call  
The cat out of the kitchen. Well,  
Lord Mammon,  
This is a pretty business!

[Exit the RAT.  
*Mammon.* I will go  
And spell some scheme to make it  
ugly then. [Exit.

Enter SWELLFOOT.

*Swellfoot.* She is returned! Taurina  
is in Thebes  
When Swellfoot wishes that she were  
in hell!  
Oh, Hymen! clothed in yellow  
jealousy,  
And waving o'er the couch of wedded  
kings  
The torch of Discord with its fiery  
hair;  
This is thy work, thou patron saint of  
queens!  
Swellfoot is wived! though parted  
by the sea,  
The very name of wife had conjugal  
rights;  
Her cursed image ate, drank, slept  
with me,  
And in the arms of Adiposa oft  
Her memory has received a hus-  
band's—

[A loud tumult, and cries of "Iona  
for ever!—No Swellfoot!"

Hark!  
How the swine cry "Iona Taurina!"  
I suffer the real presence: *Purganax*,  
Off with her head!

*Purganax.* But I must first  
impanel  
A jury of the pigs.

*Swellfoot.* Pack them then.

*Purganax.* Or fattening some few  
in two separate sties,  
And giving them clean straw, tying  
some bits  
Of ribbon round their legs—giving  
their sows  
Some tawdry lace, and bits of lustre  
glass,  
And their young boars white and red  
rags, and tails  
Of cows, and jay feathers, and stick-  
ing cauliflowers  
Between the ears of the old ones ; and  
when  
They are persuaded, that by the  
inherent virtue  
Of these things, they are all imperial  
pigs,  
Good Lord ! they'd rip each other's  
bellies up,  
Not to say help us in destroying her.  
*Swellfoot.* This plan might be tried  
too ;—where's General Laoc-  
tonos :

*Enter LAOCTONOS and DAKRY.*

It is my royal pleasure  
That you, Lord General, bring the  
head and body,  
If separate it would please me better,  
hither  
Of Queen Iona.

*Laoctonos.* That pleasure I well  
knew,  
And made a charge with those  
battalions bold,  
Called, from their dress and grin, the  
royal apes,  
Upon the swine, who in a hollow  
square  
Enclosed her, and received the first  
attack  
Like so many rhinoceroses, and then  
Retreating in good order, with bare  
tusks  
And wrinkled snouts presented to the  
foe,  
Bore her in triumph to the public sty.  
What is still worse, some sows upon  
the ground  
Have given the ape-guards apples,  
nuts, and gin,  
And they all whisk their tails aloft,  
and cry,  
" Long live Iona ! down with Swell-  
foot ! " .

*Purganax.* Hark !  
*The Swine (without).* Long live  
Iona ! down with Swellfoot !  
*Dakry.* I went to the garret of the  
swineherd's tower,  
Which overlooks the sty, and made a  
long  
Harangue (all words) to the assembled  
swine,  
Of delicacy, mercy, judgment, law,  
Morals, and precedents, and purity,  
Adultery, destitution, and divorce,  
Piety, faith, and state necessity,  
And how I loved the queen !—and  
then I wept,  
With the pathos of my own eloquence,  
And every tear turned to a millstone,  
which  
Brained many a gaping pig, and there  
was made  
A slough of blood and brains upon  
the place,  
Greased with the pounded bacon ;  
round and round  
The millstones rolled, ploughing the  
pavement up,  
And hurling sucking-pigs into the air,  
With dust and stones.—

*Enter MAMMON.*

*Mammon.* I wonder that grey  
wizards  
Like you should be so beardless in  
their schemes ;  
It had been but a point of policy  
To keep Iona and the swine apart.  
Divide and rule ! but ye have made a  
junction  
Between two parties who will govern  
you,  
But for my art.—Behold this BAG ! it  
is  
The poison-BAG of that Green Spider  
huge,  
On which our spies skulked in ovation  
through  
The streets of Thebes, when they were  
paved with dead  
A bane so much the deadlier fills it  
now,  
As calumny is worse than death,—for  
here  
The Gadfly's venom, fifty times dis-  
tilled,  
Is mingled with the vomit of the  
Leech,

In due proportion, and black ratsbane, which

That very Rat, who like the Pontic tyrant,

Nurtures himself on poison, dare not touch:—

All is sealed up with the broad seal of Fraud,

Who is the Devil's Lord High Chancellor,

And over it the primate of all Hell Murmured this pious baptism:—

"Be thou called

The GREEN BAG; and this power and grace be thine

That thy contents, on whomsoever poured,

Turn innocence to guilt, and gentlest looks

To savage, foul, and fierce deformity. Let all, baptised by thy infernal dew,

Be called adulterer, drunkard, liar, wretch!

No name left out which orthodoxy loves,

Court Journal or legitimate Review!

Be they called tyrant, beast, fool, glutton, lover

Of other wives and husbands than their own—

The heaviest sin on this side of the Alps!

Wither they to a ghastly caricature Of what was human!—let not man nor beast

Behold their face with unaverted eyes!

Or hear their names with ears that tingle not

With blood of indignation, rage, and shame!"

This is a perilous liquor;—good my lords.

[SWELLFOOT approaches to touch the GREEN BAG.

Beware! for God's sake, beware!—if you should break

The seal, and touch the fatal liquor—

*Purganax.*

There!

Give it to me. I have been used to handle

All sorts of poisons. His dread majesty

Only desires to see the colour of it.

*Mammon.* Now, with a little common sense, my lords,

Only undoing all that has been done (Yet so as it may seem we but confirm it,)

Our victory is assured. We must entice

Her majesty from the sty, and make the pigs

Believe that the contents of the GREEN BAG

Are the true test of guilt or innocence. And that, if she be guilty, 'twill transform her

To manifest deformity like guilt. If innocent, she will become trans-

figured

Into an angel, such as they say she is;

And they will see her flying through the air,

So bright that she will dim the noon-day sun;

Showering down blessings in the shape of comfits.

This, trust a priest, is just the sort of thing

Swine will believe. I'll wager you will see them

Climbing upon the thatch of their low sties;

With pieces of smoked glass, to watch her sail

Among the clouds, and some will hold the flaps

Of one another's ears between their teeth,

To catch the coming hail of comfits in. You, Purganax, who have the gift of

the gab,

Make them a solemn speech to this effect:

I go to put in readiness the feast Kept to the honour of our goddess

Famine,

Where, for more glory, let the ceremony

Take place of the uglification of the Queen.

*Dakry (to SWELLFOOT).* I, as the keeper of your sacred conscience,

Humbly remind your majesty that the care

Of your high omcc, as man-milliner To red Bellona, should not be deferred.

*Purganax.* All part, in happier  
plight to meet again. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II

SCENE I.—*The Public Sty. The  
BOARS in full Assembly.*

*Enter PURGANAX.*

*Purganax.* Grant me your patience,  
gentlemen and boars,  
Ye, by whose patience under public  
burthens  
The glorious constitution of these  
sties  
Subsists, and shall subsist. The lean  
pig-rates  
Grow with the growing populace of  
swine,  
The taxes, that true source of piggish-  
ness,  
(How can I find a more appropriate  
term  
To include religion, morals, peace, and  
plenty,  
And all that fit Boeotia as a nation  
To teach the other nations how to  
live ?)  
Increase with piggishness itself ; and  
still  
Does the revenue, that great spring of  
all  
The patronage, and pensions, and by-  
payments,  
Which freeborn pigs regard with  
jealous eyes,  
Diminish, till at length, by glorious  
steps,  
All the land's produce will be merged  
in taxes,  
And the revenue will amount to—  
nothing !  
The failure of a foreign market for  
Sausages, bristles, and blood-pud-  
dings,  
And such home manufactures, is but  
partial ;  
And, that the population of the pigs,  
Instead of hog-wash, has been fed on  
straw  
And water, is a fact which is—you  
know—  
That is—it is a state necessity—  
Temporary, of course. Those im-  
pious pigs,

Who, by frequent squeaks, have  
dared impugn  
The settled Swellfoot system, or to  
make  
Irreverent mockery of the genu-  
flexions  
Inculcated by the arch-priest, have  
been whipt  
Into a loyal and an orthodox whine.  
Things being in this happy state, the  
Queen  
Iona—  
*A loud cry from the Pigs.* She is  
innocent ! most innocent !  
*Purganax.* That is the very thing  
that I was saying,  
Gentlemen swine ; the Queen Iona  
being  
Most innocent, no doubt, returns to  
Thebes,  
And the lean sows and boars collect  
about her,  
Wishing to make her think that *we*  
believe  
(I mean those more substantial pigs,  
who swill  
Rich hog-wash, while the others  
mouth damp straw)  
That she is guilty ; thus, the lean pig  
faction  
Seeks to obtain that hog-wash, which  
has been  
Your immemorial right, and which I  
will  
Maintain you in to the last drop of—  
*A Boar (interrupting him).* What  
Does any one accuse her of ?  
*Purganax.* Why, no one  
Makes any positive accusation ;—  
but  
There were hints dropped, and so the  
privy wizards  
Conceived that it became them to  
advise  
His majesty to investigate their  
truth ;—  
Not for his own sake ; he could be  
content  
To let his wife play any pranks she  
pleased,  
If, by that sufferance, *he* could please  
the pigs ;  
But then he fears the morals of the  
swine,  
The sows especially, and what effect  
It might produce upon the purity and

Religion of the rising generation  
Of sucking-pigs, if it could be suspected

That Queen Iona— [A pause.

*First Boar.* Well, go on; we long  
To hear what she can possibly have  
done.

*Purganax.* Why, it is hinted, that a  
certain bull—

Thus much is known:—the milk-  
white bulls that feed

Beside Clitumnus and the crystal  
lakes

Of the Cispaline mountains, in fresh  
dews

Of lotus-grass and blossoming  
asphodel,

Sleeking their silken hair, and with  
sweet breath

Loading the morning winds until they  
faint

With living fragrance, are so beauti-  
ful!— [rode

Well, I say nothing;—but Europa  
On such a one from Asia into Crete,

And the enamoured sea grew calm  
beneath

His gliding beauty. And Pasiphae,  
Iona's grandmother,—but *she* is  
innocent!

And that both you and I, and all  
assert.

*First Boar.* Most innocent!

*Purganax.* Behold this BAG;  
a bag—

*Second Boar.* Oh! no GREEN  
BAGS!! Jealousy's eyes are  
green,

Scorpions are green, and water-  
snakes, and efts,

And verdigris, and—

*Purganax.* Honourable swine,  
In piggish souls can prepossessions  
reign?

Allow me to remind you, grass is  
green—

All flesh is grass;—no bacon but is  
flesh—

Ye are but bacon. This divining  
BAG

(Which is not green, but only bacon  
colour)

Is filled with liquor, which, if sprinkled  
o'er

A woman guilty of—we all know  
what—

Makes her so hideous, till she finds  
one blind,

She never can commit the like again.  
If innocent, she will turn into an

angel,  
And rain down blessings in the shape

of comfits  
As she flies up to heaven. Now, my

proposal  
Is to convert her sacred majesty

Into an angel, (as I am sure we shall  
do,)

By pouring on her head this mystic  
water. [Showing the Bag.

I know that she is innocent; I wish  
Only to prove her so to all the world.

*First Boar.* Excellent, just, and  
noble Purganax!

*Second Boar.* How glorious it will  
be to see her majesty

Flying above our heads, her petti-  
coats

Streaming like—like—like—  
*Third Boar.* Anything.

*Purganax.* Oh, no!  
But like a standard of an admiral's

ship,  
Or like the banner of a conquering

host,  
Or like a cloud dyed in the dying day,

Unravell'd on the blast from a white  
mountain;

Or like a meteor, or a war-steed's  
mane,

Or waterfall from a dizzy precipice  
Scattered upon the wind.

*First Boar.* Or a cow's tail,—  
*Second Boar.* Or anything, as the

learned boar observed,  
*Purganax.* Gentlemen boars, I

move a resolution,  
That her most sacred majesty should

be  
Invited to attend the feast of Famine,

And to receive upon her chaste white  
body

\*Dews of Apotheosis from this BAG.  
[A great confusion is heard of the

Pigs out of Doors, which com-  
municates itself to those within.

During the first Strophe, the doors  
of the Sty are staved in, and a

number of exceedingly lean Pigs  
and Sows and Boars rush in.

SEMICHORUS I.

No! Yes!

SEMICHORUS II.  
Yes! No!

SEMICHORUS I.  
A law!

SEMICHORUS II.  
A flaw!

SEMICHORUS I.  
Porkers, we shall lose our wash,  
Or must share it with the lean pigs!

FIRST BOAR.  
Order! order! be not rash!  
Was there ever such a scenc, pigs!

AN OLD SOW (*rushing in*).  
I never saw so fine a dash  
Since I first began to wear pigs.

SECOND BOAR (*solemnly*).  
The Queen will be an angel time  
enough.

I vote, in form of an amendment, that  
Purganax rub a little of that stuff  
Upon his face—

Purganax. [*His heart is seen to  
beat through his waistcoat.*]  
Gods! What would ye be at?

SEMICHORUS I.  
Purganax has plainly shown a  
Cloven foot and jackdaw feather.

SEMICHORUS II.  
I vote Swellfoot and Iona  
Try the magic test together;  
Whenever royal spouses bicker,  
Both should try the magic liquor.

AN OLD BOAR (*aside*).  
A miserable state is that of pigs,  
For if their drivers would tear caps  
and wigs,  
The swine must bite each other's ear  
therefore.

AN OLD SOW (*aside*).  
A wretched lot Jove has assigned to  
swine,  
Squabbling makes pig-herds hungry,  
and they dine  
On bacon, and whip sucking-pigs  
the more.

CHORUS.  
Hog-wash has been ta'en away:  
If the Bull-Queen is divested,

We shall be in every way  
Hunted, stript, exposed, mo-  
lested;

Let us do whate'er we may,  
That she shall not be arrested.

QUEEN, we entrench you with walls  
of brawn,  
And palisades of tusks, sharp as a  
bayonet:

Place your most sacred person here.  
We pawn  
Our lives that none a finger dare to  
lay on it.

Those who wrong you, wrong  
us;

Those who hate you, hate us;

Those who sting you, sting us;

Those who bait you, bait us;

The *oracle* is now about to be  
Fulfilled by circumvolving  
destiny;

Which says: "Thebes, choose *reform*  
or *civil war*,

When through your streets, instead  
of hare with dogs,

A CONSORT-QUEEN shall hunt a  
KING with hogs,

Riding upon the IONIAN MINO-  
TAUR."

*Enter IONA TAURINA.*

*Iona Taurina (coming forward).*  
Gentlemen swine, and gentle  
lady-pigs,

The tender heart of every boar acquits  
Their QUEEN, of any act incongruous  
With native piggishness, and she  
reposing

With confidence upon the grunting  
nation,

Has thrown herself, her cause, her life,  
her all,

Her innocence, into their hoggish  
arms;

Nor has the expectation been de-  
ceived

Of finding shelter there. Yet know,  
great boars,

(For such who ever lives among you  
finds you,

And so do I) the innocent are proud!  
I have accepted your protection only

In compliment of your kind love and  
care,

Not for necessity. The innocent.



Are safest there where trials and dangers wait ;

Innocent Queens o'er white-hot plough-shares tread

Unsung ; and ladies, Erin's laureate sings it,<sup>1</sup>

Decked with rare gems, and beauty rarer still,

Walked from Killarney to the Giant's Causeway,

Through rebels, smugglers, troops of yeomanry,

White-boys, and orange-boys, and constables,

Tithe-proctors, and excise-people, uninjured !

Thus I !—

Lord PURGANAX, I do commit myself into your custody, and am prepared To stand the test, whatever it may be !

*Purganax.* This magnanimity in your sacred majesty

Must please the pigs. You cannot fail of being

A heavenly angel. Smoke your bits of glass,

Ye loyal swine, or her transfiguration Will blind your wondering eyes.

*An Old Boar (aside).* Take care, my lord,

They do not smoke you first.

*Purganax.* At the approaching feast

Of Famine, let the expiation be.

*Swine.* Content ! content !

*Iona Taurina (aside).* I, most content of all,

Know that my foes even thus prepare their fall !

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE II.—*The interior of the Temple of FAMINE. The statue of the Goddess, a skeleton clothed in party-coloured rags, seated upon a heap of skulls and leaves intermingled. A number of exceedingly fat Priests in black garments arrayed on each side, with marrow-bones and cleavers in their hands. A flourish of trumpets.*

Enter MAMMON as Arch-priest, SWELL-

<sup>1</sup> Rich and rare were the gems she wore."  
*See Moore's Irish Melodies.*

FOOT, DAKRY, PURGANAX, LAOCTONOS, followed by IONA TAURINA guarded. On the other side enter the Swine.

CHORUS OF PRIESTS.

*Accompanied by the Court Porkman on marrow-bones and cleavers.*

Goddess bare, and gaunt, and pale, Empress of the world, all hail !

What though Cretans old called thee City-crested Cybele ?

We call thee FAMINE !

Goddess of fasts and feasts, starving and cramming ;

Through thee, for emperors, kings, and priests and lords,

Who rule by viziers, sceptres, bank-notes, words,

The earth pours forth its plenteous fruits,

Corn, wool, linen, flesh, and roots—Those who consume these fruits

through thee grow fat

Those who produce these fruits through thee grow lean.

Whatever change takes place, oh, stick to that !

And let things be as they have ever been ;

At least while we remain thy priests, And proclaim thy fasts and feasts !

Through thee the sacred SWELLFOOT dynasty

Is based upon a rock amid that sea Whose waves are swine—so let it ever be !

[*SWELLFOOT, etc., seat themselves at a table magnificently covered at the upper end of the temple. Attendants pass over the stage with hog-wash in pails. A number of Pigs, exceedingly lean, follow them licking up the wash.*]

*Mammon.* I fear your sacred majesty has lost

The appetite which you were used to have.

Allow me now to recommend this dish—

A simple kickshaw by your Persian cook,

Such as is served at the great King's second table.

The price and pains which its ingredients cost,

Might have maintained some dozen families

A winter or two—not more—so plain a dish

Could scarcely disagree.—

*Swellfoot.* After the trial, And these fastidious pigs are gone, perhaps

I may recover my lost appetite,—  
I feel the gout flying about my stomach—

Give me a glass of Maraschino punch.

*Purganax* (filling his glass and standing up).

The Glorious Constitution of the pigs!

*All.* A toast! a toast! stand up, and three times three!

*Dakry.* No heel-taps—darken day-lights!

*Laoctonos.* Claret, somehow, Puts me in mind of blood, and blood of claret!

*Swellfoot.* Laoctonos is fishing for a compliment,

But 'tis his due. Yes, you have drunk more wine,

And shed more blood, than any man in Thebes.

[To PURGANAX.  
For God's sake stop the grunting of those pigs.

*Purganax.* We dare not, sire! 'tis Famine's privilege.

CHORUS OF SWINE.

Hail to thee, hail to thee, Famine!

Thy throne is on blood, and thy robe is of rags;

Thou devil which livest on damning;  
Saint of new churches, and cant, and GREEN BAGS;

Till in pity and terror thou risest,  
Confounding the schemes of the wisest.

When thou liftest thy skeleton form,

When the loaves and the skulls roll about,

We will greet thee—the voice of a storm

Would be lost in our terrible shout!

Then hail to thee, hail to thee, Famine!

Hail to thee, Empress of Earth!

When thou risest, dividing possessions;

When thou risest, uprooting oppressions;

In the pride of thy ghastly mirth.  
Over palaces, temples, and graves,  
We will rush as thy minister-slaves,  
Trampling behind in thy train,  
Till all be made level again!

*Mammon.* I hear a crackling of the giant bones

Of the dread image, and in the black pits

Which once were eyes, I see two livid flames:

These prodigies are oracular, and show

The presence of the unseen Deity.  
Mighty events are hastening to their doom!

*Swellfoot.* I only hear the lean and mutinous swine

Grunting about the temple.

*Dakry.* In a crisis  
Of such exceeding delicacy, I think

We ought to put her majesty, the QUEEN,

Upon her trial without delay.

*Mammon.* The BAG Is here.

*Purganax.* I have rehearsed the entire scene

With an ox-bladder and some ditch-water,

On Lady P.—it cannot fail.

[Taking up the bag.  
Your majesty (to SWELLFOOT)

In such a filthy business had better Stand on one side, lest it should

sprinkle you.  
A spot or two on me would do no harm;

Nay, it might hide the blood, which the sad genius

Of the Green Isle has fixed, as by a spell,

Upon my brow—which would stain all its seas

But which those seas could never wash away!

*Iona Taurina.* Mylord, I am ready, —nay, I am impatient,

To undergo the test.

[A graceful figure in a semi-transparent veil passes unnoticed

*through the temple: the word LIBERTY is seen through the veil, as if it were written in fire upon its forehead. Its words are almost drowned in the furious grunting of the Pigs, and the business of the trial. She kneels on the steps of the Altar, and speaks in tones at first faint and low, but which ever become louder and louder.*

Mighty Empress! Death's white wife!

Ghastly mother-in-law of life!

By the God who made thee such,

By the magic of thy touch,

By the starving and thy cramming,  
Of fasts and feasts!—by thy dread self, O Famine!

I charge thee! when thou wake the multitude,

Thou lead them not upon the paths of blood.

The earth did never mean her foison  
For those who crown life's cup with poison

Of fanatic rage and meaningless revenge—

But for those radiant spirits, who are still

The standard-bearers in the van of Change.

Be they th' appointed stewards, to fill

The lap of Pain, and Toil, and Age!—  
Remit, O Queen! thy accustom'd rage!

Be what thou art not! In voice faint and low

FREEDOM calls Famine,—her eternal foe—

To brief alliance, hollow truce.—Rise now!

*[Whilst the veiled figure has been chanting this strophe, MAMMON, DAKRY, LAOCTONOS, and SWELLFOOT, have surrounded IONA TAURINA, who, with her hands folded on her breast, and her eyes lifted to Heaven, stands, as with saint-like resignation, to wait the issue of the business; in perfect confidence of her innocence.]*

[PURGANAX, after unsealing the

GREEN BAG, is gravely about to pour the liquor upon her head, when suddenly the whole expression of her figure and countenance changes; she snatches it from his hand with a loud laugh of triumph, and empties it over SWELLFOOT and his whole Court, who are instantly changed into a number of filthy and ugly animals, and rush out of the temple. The image of FAMINE then arises with a tremendous sound, the PIGS begin scrambling for the loaves, and are tripped up by the skulls; all those who eat the loaves are turned into BULLS, and arrange themselves quietly behind the altar. The image of FAMINE sinks through a chasm in the earth, and a MINOTAUR rises.

Minotaur. I am the Ionian Minotaur, the mightiest

Of all Europa's taurine progeny—

I am the old traditional man bull;

And from my ancestors having been Ionian,

I am called Ion, which, by interpretation,

Is JOHN; in plain Theban, that is to say,

My name's JOHN BULL; I am a famous hunter,

And can leap any gate in all Bœotia,  
Even the palings of the royal park,

Or double ditch about the new enclosures;

And if your majesty will deign to mount me,

At least till you have hunted down your game,

I will not throw you.

Iona Taurina.

*[During this speech she has been putting on boots and spurs, and a hunting-cap, buckishly cocked on one side, and tucking up her hair, she leaps nimbly on his back.]*

Hoa! hoa! tallyho! tallyho! ho! ho!  
Come, let us hunt these ugly badgers down,

These stinking foxes, these devouring otters,

These hares, these wolves, these anything but men.

Hey, for a whipper-in ! my loyal pigs,  
Now let your noses be as keen as  
beagles', [and your cries  
Your steps as swift as greyhounds',  
More dulcet and symphonious than  
the bells [day ;

Of village towers, on sunshine holi-  
Wake all the dewy woods with jangling music.

Give them no law (are they not beasts  
of blood ?)

But such as they gave you. Tallyho !  
ho !

Through forest, furze, and bog, and  
den, and desert,

Pursue the ugly beasts ! tallyho ! ho !

FULL CHORUS OF IONA AND THE  
SWINE.

Tallyho ! tallyho .

Through rain, hail, and snow,  
Through brake, gorse, and briar,  
Through fen, flood, and mire,  
We go ! we go !

Tallyho ! tallyho !

Through pond, ditch, and slough,  
Wind them, and find them,  
Like the devil behind them,

Tallyho ! tallyho !

*[Exeunt, in full cry ; IONA driving  
on the SWINE, with the empty  
GREEN BAG.]*

## EARLY POEMS

### A SUMMER-EVENING CHURCH- YARD

LECHDALE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

THE wind has swept from the wide  
atmosphere

Each vapour that obscured the sun-  
set's ray ;

And pallid evening twines its beaming  
hair

In duskier braids around the lan-  
guid eyes of day :

Silence and twilight, unbeloved of  
men,

Creep hand in hand from yon obscur-  
est glen.

They breathe their spells towards the  
departing day,

Encompassing the earth, air, stars,  
and sea ;

Light, sound, and motion own the  
potent sway,

Responding to the charm with its  
own mystery.

The winds are still, or the dry church-  
tower grass

Knows not their gentle motions as  
they pass.

Thou too, ærial Pile ! whose pin-  
nacles

Point from one shrine like pyramids  
of fire,

Obeyst in silence their sweet solemn  
spells,

Clothing in hues of heaven thy dim  
and distant spire,

Around whose lessening and invisible  
height

Gather among the stars the clouds of  
night.

The dead are sleeping in their sepul-  
chres :

And, mouldering as they sleep, a  
thrilling sound,

Half sense, half thought, among the  
darkness stirs,

Breathed from their wormy beds all  
living things around,

And mingling with the still night and  
mute sky  
Its awful hush is felt inaudibly.

Thus solemnised and softened, death  
is mild  
And terrorless as this serenest  
night;  
Here could I hope, like some inquiring  
child  
Sporting on graves, that death did  
hide from human sight  
Sweet secrets, or beside its breathless  
sleep  
That loveliest dreams perpetual  
watch did keep.

### MUTABILITY

We are as clouds that veil the mid-  
night moon;  
How restlessly they speed, and  
gleam, and quiver,  
Streaking the darkness radiantly!—  
yet soon  
Night closes round, and they are  
lost for ever;

Or like forgotten lyres, whose disson-  
ant strings  
Give various response to each vary-  
ing blast,  
To whose frail frame no second mo-  
tion brings  
One mood or modulation like the  
last.

We rest—a dream has power to poi-  
son sleep;  
We rise—one wandering thought  
pollutes the day;  
We feel, conceive or reason, laugh or  
weep;  
Embrace fond woe, or cast our  
cares away:

It is the same!—For, be it joy or sor-  
row,  
The path of its departure still is  
free;  
Man's yesterday may ne'er be like his  
morrow;  
Nought may endure but Mutability.

### ON DEATH

There is no work, nor device, nor know-  
ledge, nor wisdom, in the grave,  
whither thou goest.—ECCLESIASTES.

THE pale, the cold, and the moony  
smile  
Which the meteor beam of a star-  
less night  
Sheds on a lonely and sea-girt isle,  
Ere the dawning of morn's un-  
doubted light,  
Is the flame of life so fickle and wan  
That flits round our steps till their  
strength is gone.

O man! hold thee on in courage of  
soul  
Through the stormy shades of thy  
worldly way.  
And the billows of cloud that around  
thee roll  
Shall sleep in the light of a wondrous  
day,  
Where hell and heaven shall leave  
thee free  
To the universe of destiny.

This world is the nurse of all we know,  
This world is the mother of all we  
feel,  
And the coming of death is a fearful  
blow,  
To a brain unencompassed with  
nerves of steel;  
When all that we know, or feel, or see,  
Shall pass like an unreal mystery.

The secret things of the grave are  
there,  
Where all but this frame must surely  
be,  
Though the fine-wrought eye and the  
wondrous ear  
No longer will live to hear or to see  
All that is great and all that is strange  
In the boundless realm of unending  
change.

Who telleth a tale of unspeaking  
death?  
Who lifteth the veil of what is to  
come?  
Who painteth the shadows that are  
beneath

The wide-winding caves of the  
peopled tomb?  
Or uniteth the hopes of what shall be  
With the fears and the love for that  
which we see?

## TO COLERIDGE

ΔΑΚΡΥΤΕΙ ΔΙΟΙΣΩ ΗΙΟΤΜΟΝ  
ΑΗΙΟΤΜΟΝ

OH! there are spirits in the air,  
And genii of the evening breeze,  
And gentle ghosts, with eyes as fair  
As starbeams among twilight  
trees:—  
Such lovely ministers to meet  
Oft hast thou turned from men thy  
lonely feet.

With mountain winds, and bab-  
bling springs,  
And mountain seas, that are the  
voice  
Of these inexplicable things,  
Thou didst hold commune, and  
rejoice  
When they did answer thee; but  
they  
Cast, like a worthless boon, thy love  
away.

And thou hast sought in starry eyes  
Beams that were never meant  
for thine,  
Another's wealth;—tame sacrifice  
To a fond faith! still dost thou  
pine?  
Still dost thou hope that ungreeting  
hands,  
Voice, looks, or lips, may answer thy  
demands?

Ah! wherefore didst thou build  
thine hope  
On the false earth's inconstancy?  
Did thine own mind afford no scope  
Of love, or moving thoughts to  
thee?  
That natural scenes or human smiles  
Could steal the power to wind thee in  
their wiles.

Yes, all the faithless smiles are fled  
Whose falsehood left thee  
broken-hearted;

The glory of the moon is dead;  
Night's ghosts and dreams have  
now departed;  
Thine own soul still is true to thee,  
But changed to a foul fiend through  
misery.

This fiend, whose ghastly presence  
ever  
Beside thee like thy shadow  
hangs,  
Dream not to chase;—the mad  
endeavour  
Would scourge thee to severer  
pangs.  
Be as thou art. Thy settled fate,  
Dark as it is, all change would aggra-  
vate.

## TO WORDSWORTH

POET of Nature, thou hast wept to  
know  
That things depart which never may  
return;  
Childhood and youth, friendship and  
love's first glow,  
Have fled like sweet dreams, leaving  
thee to mourn.  
These common woes I feel. One loss  
is mine,  
Which thou too feel'st; yet I alone  
deplore.  
Thou wert as a lone star, whose light  
did shine  
On some frail bark in winter's mid-  
night roar:  
Thou hast like to a rock-built refuge  
stood  
Above the blind and battling multi-  
tude:  
In honoured poverty thy voice did  
weave  
Songs consecrate to truth and  
liberty,—  
Deserting these, thou leavest me to  
grieve,  
Thus having been, that thou shouldst  
cease to be.

## LINES

THE cold earth slept below,  
Above the cold sky shone,  
And all around  
With a chilling sound,

From caves of ice and fields of snow,  
The breath of night like death did  
    flow  
    Beneath the sinking moon.

The wintry hedge was black,  
    The green grass was not seen,  
    The birds did rest  
    On the bare thorn's breast,  
Whose roots beside the pathway  
    track,  
Had bound their folds o'er many a  
    crack  
    Which the frost had made be-  
    tween.

Thine eyes glowed in the glare  
    Of the moon's dying light,  
    As a fen-fire's beam  
    On a sluggish stream  
Gleams dimly—the moon shone  
    there,  
And it yellowed the strings of thy  
    tangled hair,  
    That shook in the wind of night.

The moon made thy lips pale, beloved;  
    The wind made thy bosom chill;  
    The night did shed  
    On thy dear head  
Its frozen dew, and thou didst lie  
Where the bitter breath of the naked  
    sky  
    Might visit thee at will.

#### STANZAS.—APRIL, 1814

AWAY! the moor is dark beneath the  
    moon,  
Rapid clouds have drunk the last  
    pale beam of even:  
Away! the gathering winds will call  
    the darkness soon,  
And profoundest midnight shroud  
    the serene lights of heaven.  
Pause not! The time is past! Every  
    voice cries, "Away!"  
Tempt not with one last glance thy  
    friend's ungentle mood;  
Thy lover's eye, so glazed and cold,  
    dares not entreat thy stay  
Duty and dereliction guide thee  
    back to solitude.

Away, away! to thy sad and silent  
    home;  
Pour bitter tears on its desolated  
    hearth;  
Watch the dim shades as like ghosts  
    they go and come,  
And complicate strange webs of  
    melancholy mirth.  
The leaves of wasted autumn woods  
    shall float around thine head,  
The blooms of dewy spring shall  
    gleam beneath thy feet:  
But thy soul or this world must fade  
    in the frost that binds the dead  
Ere midnight's frown and morn-  
    ing's smile, ere thou and peace  
    may meet.

The cloud shadows of midnight pos-  
    sess their own repose,  
For the weary winds are silent, or  
    the moon is in the deep;  
Some respite to its turbulence unrest-  
    ing ocean knows;  
Whatever moves, or toils, or grieves  
    hath its appointed sleep.  
Thou in the grave shalt rest—yet till  
    the phantoms flee  
Which that house and heath and  
    garden made dear to thee ere-  
    while,  
Thy remembrance, and repentance,  
    and deep musings, are not free  
From the music of two voices, and  
    the light of one sweet smile.

#### FEELINGS OF A REPUBLICAN ON THE FALL OF BONAPARTE

I HATED thee, fallen tyrant! I did  
    groan  
To think that a most unambitious  
    slave,  
Like thou, shouldst dance and revel on  
    the grave  
Of Liberty. Thou mightst have  
    built thy throne  
Where it had stood even now: thou  
    didst prefer  
A frail and bloody pomp, which time  
    has swept  
In fragments towards oblivion. Mas-  
    sacre,  
For this I prayed, would on thy sleep  
    have crept,

Treason and Slavery, Rapine, Fear and Lust, [know And stifled thee, their minister. I Too late, since thou and France are in the dust,	That Virtue owns a more eternal foe Than force or fraud : old Custom, legal Crime, And bloody Faith, the foulest birth of time.
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## POEMS WRITTEN IN 1816

## THE SUNSET

THERE late was One, within whose subtle being, As light and wind within some deli- cate cloud That fades amid the blue noon's burn- ing sky, Genius and death contended. None may know The sweetness of the joy which made his breath Fail, like the trances of the summer air, When, with the Lady of his love, who then First knew the unreserve of mingled being, He walked along the pathway of a field, Which to the east a hoar wood shadowed o'er, But to the west was open to the sky. There now the sun had sunk, but lines of gold Hung on the ashen clouds, and on the points Of the far level grass and nodding flowers, And the old dandelion's hoary beard, And, mingled with the shades of twi- light, lay On the brown massy woods—and in the east The broad and burning moon linger- ingly rose Between the black trunks of the crowded trees, While the faint stars were gathering overhead.— "Is it not strange, Isabel," said the youth,	"I never saw the sun ? We will walk here To-morrow ; thou shalt look on it with me." That night the youth and lady min- gled lay In love and sleep—but when the morning came The lady found her lover dead and cold. Let none believe that God in mercy gave That stroke. The lady died not, nor grew wild, But year by year lived on—in truth I think Her gentleness and patience and sad smiles, And that she did not die, but lived to tend Her aged father, were a kind of mad- ness, If madness 'tis to be unlike the world. For but to see her were to read the tale Woven by some subtlest bard, to make hard hearts Dissolve away in wisdom-working grief ;— Her eyelashes were torn away with tears, Her lips and cheeks were like things dead—so pale ; Her hands were thin, and through their wandering veins And weak articulations might be seen Day's ruddy light. The tomb of thy dead self Which one vexed ghost inhabits, night and day, Is all, lost child, that now remains of thee !
---	---



" Inheritor of more than earth can  
give,  
Passionless calm, and silence unre-  
proved,  
Whether the dead find, oh, not sleep !  
but rest,  
And are the uncomplaining thing-  
they seem,  
Or live, or drop in the deep sea of  
Love ;  
Oh, that like thine, mine epitaph were  
—Peace ! "  
This was the only moan she ever  
made.

### HYMN TO INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY

THE awful shadow of some unseen  
Power  
Floats tho' unseen among us ;  
visiting  
This various world with as inconst-  
ant wing  
As summer winds that creep from  
flower to flower :  
Like moonbeams that behind some  
piny mountain shower,  
It visits with inconstant glance  
Each human heart and counten-  
ance ;  
Like hues and harmonies of evening,  
Like clouds in starlight widely  
spread,  
Like memory of music fled,  
Like aught that for its grace may  
be  
Dear and yet dearer for its mystery.—  
Spirit of BEAUTY, that dost conse-  
crate  
With thine own hues all thou dost  
shine upon  
Of human thought or form, where  
art thou gone ?  
Why dost thou pass away and leave  
our state,  
This dim vast vale of tears, vacant  
and desolate ?  
Ask why the sunlight not for ever  
Weaves rainbows o'er, yon moun-  
tain river ;  
Why aught should fail and fade that  
once is shown ;

Why fear and dream and death  
and birth  
Cast on the daylight of this earth  
Such gloom ; why man has such  
a scope  
For love and hate, despondency and  
hope ;

No voice from some sublimer world  
hath ever  
To sage or poet these responses  
given :  
Therefore the names of Demon,  
Ghost, and Heaven,  
Remain the records of their vain  
endeavour ;  
Frail spells, whose uttered charm  
might not avail to sever,  
From all we hear and all we see,  
Doubt, chance, and mutability.  
Thy light alone, like mist o'er moun-  
tains driven,  
Or music by the night wind sent  
Through strings of some still in-  
strument,  
Or moonlight on a midnight  
stream,  
Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet  
dream.

Love, Hope, and Self-esteem, like  
clouds depart  
And come, for some uncertain mo-  
ments lent.  
Man were immortal and omnipo-  
tent,  
Didst thou, unknown and awful as  
thou art,  
Keep with thy glorious train firm  
state within his heart.  
Thou messenger of sympathies  
That wax and wane in lovers'  
eyes ;  
Thou, that to human thought art  
nourishment,  
Like darkness to a dying flame !  
Depart not as thy shadow came :  
Depart not, lest the grave should  
be,  
Like life and fear, a dark reality.

While yet a boy I sought for ghosts,  
and sped  
Thro' many a listening chamber,  
cave, and ruin,

And starlight wood, with fearful  
steps pursuing  
Hopes of high talk with the departed  
dead.

I called on poisonous names with  
which our youth is fed

I was not heard, I saw them not ;  
When musing deeply on the lot  
Of life, at that sweet time when winds  
are wooing

All vital things that wake to  
bring  
News of birds and blossoming,  
Sudden, thy shadow fell on me ;  
I shrieked, and clasped my hands in  
ecstasy !

I vowed that I would dedicate my  
powers

To thee and thine . have I not kept  
the vow ?

With beating heart and streaming  
eyes, even now

I call the phantoms of a thousand  
hours

Each from his voiceless grave : they  
have in visioned bowers

Of studious zeal or love's delight  
Outwatched with me the envious  
night :

They know that never joy illumed  
my brow,

Unlinked with hope that thou  
wouldst free

This world from its dark slavery,  
That thou, O awful LOVELINESS,

Wouldst give whate'er these words  
cannot express.

The day becomes more solemn and  
serene

When noon is past : there is a har-  
mony

In autumn, and a lustre in its sky,  
Which thro' the summer is not heard  
nor seen,

As if it could not be, as if it had not  
been !

Thus let thy power, which like  
the truth

Of nature on my passive youth

Descended, to my onward life supply  
Its calm, to one who worships  
thee,

And every form containing thee,

Whom, SPIRIT fair, thy spells did  
bind  
To fear himself, and love all human-  
kind.

## MONT BLANC

LINES WRITTEN IN THE VALE OF  
CHAMOUNI

## I

THE everlasting universe of things  
Flows through the mind, and rolls its  
rapid waves,

Now dark—now glittering—now re-  
flecting gloom—

Now lending splendour, where from  
secret springs

The source of human thought its  
tribute brings

Of waters,—with a sound but half its  
own,

Such as a feeble brook will oft assume  
In the wild woods, among the moun-  
tains lone,

Where waterfalls around it leap for  
ever,

Where woods and winds contend, and  
a vast river

Over its rocks ceaselessly bursts and  
raves.

## II

Thus thou, Ravine of Arve—dark,  
deep Ravine—

Thou many-coloured, many-voiced  
vale,

Over whose pines and crags and cav-  
erns sail

Fast clouds, shadows, and sunbeams ;  
awful scene,

Where Power in likeness of the Arve  
comes down

From the ice-gulfs that gird his secret  
throne,

Bursting through these dark moun-  
tains like the flame

Of lightning through the tempest ;  
thou dost lie,

The giant brood of pines around thee  
clinging,

Children of elder time, in whose devo-  
tion,

The chainless winds still come and  
ever came

To drink their odours, and their  
mighty swinging  
To hear—~~an~~ old and solemn har-  
mony:  
Thine earthly rainbows stretched  
across the sweep  
Of the ethereal waterfall, whose veil  
Robes some unsculptured image; the  
strange sleep  
Which, when the voices of the desert  
fail,  
Wraps all in its own deep eternity;—  
Thy caverns echoing to the Arve's  
commotion  
A loud, lone sound, no other sound  
can tame;  
Thou art pervaded with that cease-  
less motion,  
Thou art the path of that unresting  
sound—  
Dizzy Ravine! and when I gaze on  
thee,  
I seem as in a trance sublime and  
strange  
To muse on my own separate fantasy,  
My own, my human mind, which pas-  
sively,  
Now renders and receives fast influ-  
encings,  
Holding an unremitting interchange  
With the clear universe of things  
around;  
One legion of wild thoughts, whose  
wandering wings  
Now float above thy darkness, and  
now rest  
Where that or thou art no unbidden  
guest,  
In the still cave of the witch Poesy,  
Seeking among the shadows that pass  
by  
Ghosts of all things that are, some  
shade of thee,  
Some phantom, some faint image;  
till the breast  
From which they fled recalls them,  
thou art there!

## III

Some say that gleams of a remoter  
world  
Visit the soul in sleep,—that death is  
slumber,  
And that its shapes the busy thoughts  
outnumber

Of those who wake and live. I look  
on high;  
Has some unknown omnipotence un-  
furled  
The veil of life and death? or do I lie  
In dream, and does the mightier world  
of sleep  
Speed far around and inaccessibly  
Its circles? For the very spirit fails,  
Driven like a homeless cloud from  
steep to steep  
That vanishes among the viewless  
gales!  
Far, far above, piercing the infinite  
sky,  
Mont Blanc appears,—still, snowy,  
and serene— [forms  
Its subject mountains their unearthly  
Pile around it, ice and rock; broad  
vales between  
Of frozen flood, unfathomable deeps,  
Blue as the overhanging heaven, that  
spread [steeps;  
And wind among the accumulated  
A desert peopled by the storms alone,  
Save when the eagle brings some hun-  
ter's bone,  
And the wolf tracks her there—how  
hideously  
Its shapes are heaped around! rude,  
bare, and high,  
Ghastly, and scarred, and riven.—Is  
this the scene  
Where the old Earthquake-demon  
taught her young  
Ruin? Were these their toys? or  
did a sea  
Of fire envelope once this silent snow?  
None can reply—all seems eternal  
now.  
The wilderness has a mysterious  
tongue  
Which teaches awful doubt, of faith  
so mild,  
So solemn, so serene, that man may  
be  
But for such faith with nature recon-  
ciled;  
Thou hast a voice, great Mountain,  
to repeal  
Large codes of fraud and woe; not  
understood,  
By all, but which the wise, and great,  
and good,  
Interpret or make felt, or deeply feel.

## IV

The fields, the lakes, the forests, and  
the streams,  
Ocean, and all the living things that  
dwell  
Within the dædal earth; lightning,  
and rain,  
Earthquake, and fiery flood, and  
hurricane,  
The torpor of the year when feeble  
dreams  
Visit the hidden buds, or dreamless  
sleep  
Holds every future leaf and flower,—  
the bound  
With which from that detested trance  
they leap;  
The works and ways of man, their  
death and birth,  
And that of him, and all that his may  
be;  
All things that move and breathe with  
toil and sound  
Are born and die, revolve, subside,  
and swell.  
Power dwells apart in its tranquillity,  
Remote, serene, and inaccessible:  
And *this*, the naked countenance of  
earth,  
On which I gaze, even these primæval  
mountains,  
Teach the adverting mind. The gla-  
ciers creep,  
Like snakes that watch their prey,  
from their far fountains,  
Slowly rolling on; there, many a  
precipice  
Frost and the Sun in scorn of mortal  
power  
Have piled—dome, pyramid, and  
pinnacle,  
A city of death, distinct with many a  
tower  
And wall impregnable of beaming ice.  
Yet not a city, but a flood of ruin  
Is there, that from the boundaries of  
the sky  
Rolls its perpetual stream; vast  
pines are strewing  
Its destined path, or in the mangled  
soil  
Branchless and shattered stand; the  
rocks, drawn down  
From yon remotest waste, have over-  
thrown

The limits of the dead and living  
world,  
Never to be reclaimed. The dwelling-  
place  
Of insects, beasts, and birds, becomes  
its spoil;  
Their food and their retreat for ever  
gone,  
So much of life and joy is lost. The  
race  
Of man flies far in dread; his work  
and dwelling  
Vanish, like smoke before the tem-  
pest's stream,  
And their place is not known. Below,  
vast caves  
Shine in the rushing torrent's restless  
gleam,  
Which from those secret chasms in  
tumult welling  
Meet in the Vale, and one majestic  
River,  
The breath and blood of distant lands,  
for ever  
Rolls its loud waters to the ocean  
waves,  
Breathes its swift vapours to the cir-  
cling air.

## V

Mont Blanc yet gleams on high: the  
power is there,  
The still and solemn power of many  
sights  
And many sounds, and much of life  
and death.  
In the calm darkness of the moonless  
nights,  
In the long glare of day, the snows  
descend  
Upon that Mountain; none beholds  
them there,  
Nor when the flakes burn in the sink-  
ing sun,  
Or the starbeams dart through them:  
—Winds contend  
Silently there, and heap the snow,  
with breath  
Rapid and strong, but silently! Its  
home  
The voiceless lightning in these soli-  
tudes  
Keeps innocently, and like vapour  
broods

Over the snow. The secret strength  
of things,  
Which governs thought, and to the  
infinite dome  
Of heaven is as a law, inhabits thee !

And what were thou, and earth, and  
stars, and sea,  
If to the human mind's imaginings  
Silence and solitude were vacancy ?

SWITZERLAND, *June 23, 1816.*

## POEMS WRITTEN IN 1817

### PRINCE ATHANASE

#### A FRAGMENT

#### PART I

THERE was a youth, who, as with toil  
and travel,  
Had grown quite weak and grey be-  
fore his time ;  
Nor any could the restless griefs un-  
ravel

Which burned within him, withering  
up his prime  
And goading him, like fiends, from  
land to land.

Not his the load of any secret crime,

For nought of ill his heart could  
understand,

But pity and wild sorrow for the  
same ;

Not his the thirst for glory or com-  
mand,

Baffled with blast of hope-consuming  
shame ;

Nor evil joys which fire the vulgar  
breast,

And quench in speedy smoke its feeble  
flame,

Had left within his soul the dark un-  
rest :

Nor what religion fables of the grave  
Feared he,—Philosophy's accepted  
guest.

For none than he a purer heart could  
have,

Or that loved good more for itself  
alone ;

Of nought in heaven or earth was he  
the slave.

What sorrow, strange, and shadowy,  
and unknown,

Sent him, a hopeless wanderer,  
through mankind ?—

If with a human sadness he did groan,

He had a gentle yet aspiring mind ;  
Just, innocent, with varied learning  
fed ;

And such a glorious consolation find

In others' joy, when all their own is  
dead :

He loved, and laboured for his kind  
in grief,

And yet, unlike all others, it is said

That from such toil he never found  
relief.

Although a child of fortune and of  
power, [chief,

Of an ancestral name the orphan

His soul had wedded wisdom, and her  
dower

Is love and justice, clothed in which  
he sate

Apart from men, as in a lonely tower,

Pitying the tumult of their dark  
estate.—

Yet even in youth did he not e'er  
abuse

The strength of wealth or thought, to  
consecrate

Those false opinions which the harsh  
rich use

To blind the world they famish for  
their pride ;

Nor did he hold from any man his  
dues,

But, like a steward in honest dealings  
tried,

With those who toiled and wept, the  
poor and wise,

His riches and his cares he did divide.

Fearless he was, and scornful all disguise,  
 What he dared do or think, though men might start,  
 He spoke with mild yet unaverted eyes ;  
 Liberal he was of soul, and frank of heart,  
 And to his many friends—all loved him well—  
 Whate'er he knew or felt he would impart,  
 If words he found those inmost thoughts to tell ;  
 If not, he smiled or wept ; and his weak foes  
 He neither spurned nor hated—though with fell  
 And mortal hate their thousand voices rose,  
 They passed like aimless arrows from his ear.—  
 Nor did his heart or mind its portal close  
 To those, or them, or any, whom life's sphere  
 May comprehend within its wide array.  
 What sadness made that vernal spirit sere ?  
 He knew not. Though his life day after day,  
 Was failing, like an unreplenished stream ;  
 Though in his eyes a cloud and burthen lay,  
 Through which his soul, like Vesper's serene beam  
 Piercing the chasms of ever rising clouds,  
 Shone, softly burning ; though his lips did seem  
 Like reeds which quiver in impetuous floods ;  
 And through his sleep, and o'er each waking hour,  
 Thoughts after thoughts, unresting multitudes,  
 Were driven within him by some secret power,  
 Which bade them blaze, and live, and roll afar,

Like lights and sounds, from haunted tower to tower,  
 O'er castled mountains borne, when tempest's war  
 Is levied by the night-contending winds,  
 And the pale dalesmen watch with eager ear ;—  
 Though such were in his spirit, as the fiends  
 Which wake and feed on everliving woe,—  
 What was this grief, which ne'er in other minds  
 A mirror found, he knew not, none could know ;  
 But on whome'er might question him he turned  
 The light of his frank eyes, as if to show  
 He knew not of the grief within that burned,  
 But asked forbearance with a mournful look ;  
 Or spoke in words from which none ever learned  
 The cause of his disquietude ; or shook  
 With spasms of silent passion ; or turned pale :  
 So that his friends soon rarely undertook  
 To stir his secret pain without avail ;—  
 For all who knew and loved him then perceived  
 That there was drawn an adamantine veil  
 Between his heart and mind,—both unrelieved  
 Wrought in his brain and bosom separate strife.  
 Some said that he was mad, others believed  
 That memories of an antenatal life  
 Made this, where now he dwelt, a penal hell :  
 And others said that such mysterious grief  
 From God's displeasure, like a darkness, fell

On souls like his, which owned no  
higher law

Than love—love, calm, steadfast, in-  
vincible

By mortal fear or supernatural awe ;  
And others,—“ ’Tis the shadow of a  
dream

Which the veiled eye of memory never  
saw,

“ But through the soul’s abyss, like  
some dark stream

Through shattered mines and caverns  
underground

Rolls, shaking its foundations ; and no  
beam

“ Of joy may rise, but it is quenched  
and drowned

In the dim whirlpools of this dream  
obscure.

Soon its exhausted waters will have  
found

“ A lair of rest beneath thy spirit pure,  
O Athanase !—in one so good and  
great,

Evil or tumult cannot long endure.”

So spake they : idly of another’s state  
Babbling vain words and fond philo-  
sophy :

This was their consolation ; such de-  
bate

Men held with one another ; nor did  
he,

Like one who labours with a human  
woe,

Decline this talk ; as if its theme  
might be

Another, not himself, he to and fro  
Questioned and canvassed it with  
subtlest wit ;

And none but those who loved him  
best could know

That which he knew not, how it galled  
and bit

His weary mind, this converse vain  
and cold ;

For like an eyeless nightmare grief  
did sit

Upon his being ; a snake which fold  
by fold

Pressed out the life of life, a clinging,  
fiend

Which clenched him if he stirred with  
deadlier hold ;—

And so his grief remained—let it re-  
main—untold.<sup>1</sup>

## FRAGMENTS OF PRINCE ATHANASE<sup>2</sup>

### PART II

#### FRAGMENT I

PRINCE ATHANASE had one beloved  
friend,

An old, old man, with hair of silver  
white,

And lips where heavenly smiles would  
hang and blend

With his wise words ; and eyes whose  
arrowy light

Shone like the reflex of a thousand  
minds.

He was the last whom superstition’s  
blight

Had spared in Greece—the blight that  
cramps and blinds,—

And in his olive bower at Cœnoe  
Had sate from earliest youth. Like  
one who finds

<sup>1</sup> The Author was pursuing a fuller develop-  
ment of the ideal character of Athanase, when  
it struck him that in an attempt at extreme  
refinement and analysis, his conceptions might  
be betrayed into the assuming a morbid char-  
acter. The reader will judge whether he is a  
loser or gainer by this difference.—*Author’s Note.*

<sup>2</sup> The idea Shelley had formed of Prince Athanase was a good deal modelled on Alastor. In the first sketch of the Poem he named it Pandemos and Urania. Athanase seeks through the world the One whom he may love. He meets, in the ship in which he is embarked, a lady, who appears to him, to embody his ideal of love and beauty. But she proves to be Pandemos, or the earthly and unworthy Venus, who, after disappointing his cherished dreams and hopes, deserts him. Athanase, crushed by sorrow, pines and dies. “ On his death bed the lady, who can really reply to his soul, comes and kisses his lips.”—*The Death bed of Athanase.* The poet describes her—

Her hair was brown, her sphered eyes were brown,  
And in their dark and liquid moisture swam,  
Like the dim orb of the eclipsed moon ;

Yet when the spirit flashed beneath, there came  
The light from them, as when tears of delight  
Double the western planet’s serene flame.

This slender note is all we have to aid our imagi-  
nation in shaping out the form of the poem,  
such as its author imagined.—*M.S.*

A fertile island in the barren sea,  
One mariner who has survived his  
mates  
Many a drear month in a great ship—  
so he

With soul-sustaining songs, and sweet  
debates  
Of ancient lore, there fed his lonely  
being :  
" The mind becomes that which it  
contemplates,"—

And thus Zonoras, by for ever seeing  
Their bright creations, grew like wis-  
est men ;  
And when he heard the crash of na-  
tions fleeing

A bloodier power than ruled thy ruins  
then,  
O sacred Hellas ! many weary years  
He wandered, till the path of Laian's  
glen

Was grass-grown—and the unremem-  
bered tears  
Were dry in Laian for their honoured  
chief,  
Who fell in Byzant, pierced by Mos-  
lem spears :—

And as the lady looked with faithful  
grief  
From her high lattice o'er the rugged  
path,  
Where she once saw that horseman  
toil, with brief

And blighting hope, who with the  
news of death  
Struck body and soul as with a mortal  
blight,  
She saw beneath the chestnuts far be-  
neath,

An old man totting up, a weary wight ;  
And soon within her hospitable hall  
She saw his white hairs glittering in  
the light

Of the wood fire, and round his shoul-  
ders fall,  
And his wan visage and his withered  
mien,  
Yet calm and gentle and majestic.

And Athanase, her child, who must  
have been

Then three years old, sat opposite  
and gazed  
In patient silence.

FRAGMENT II

SUCH was Zonoras ; and as daylight  
finds  
One amaranth glittering on the path  
of frost,  
When autumn nights have nipt all  
weaker kinds,

Thus through his age, dark, cold, and  
tempest-tost,  
Shone truth upon Zonoras ; and he  
filled  
From fountains pure, nigh overgrown  
and lost,

The spirit of Prince Athanase, a child,  
With soul-sustaining songs of ancient  
lore  
And philosophic wisdom, clear and  
mild.

And sweet and subtle talk now ever-  
more,  
The pupil and the master shared ;  
until,  
Sharing that undiminishable store,  
The youth, as shadows on a grassy  
hill  
Outrun the winds that chase them,  
soon outran  
His teacher, and did teach with na-  
tive skill

Strange truths and new to that ex-  
perienced man.  
Still they were friends, as few have  
ever been  
Who mark the extremes of life's dis-  
cordant span.

So in the caverns of the forest green,  
Or by the rocks of echoing ocean hoar,  
Zonoras and Prince Athanase were  
seen

By summer woodmen ; and when  
winter's roar  
Sounded o'er earth and sea its blast  
of war,  
The Balearic fisher, driven from  
shore,

Hanging upon the peaked wave afar,  
Then saw their lamp from Laian's  
turret gleam,



Piercing the stormy darkness, like a  
star

Which pours beyond the sea one  
steadfast beam,

Whilst all the constellations of the sky  
Seemed reeling through the storm;  
they did but seem—

For, lo! the wintry clouds are all  
gone by,

And bright Arcturus through yon  
pines is glowing,

And far o'er southern waves, immov-  
ably

Belted Orion hangs—warm light is  
flowing

From the young moon into the sun-  
set's chasm.—

"O summer eve! with power divine,  
bestowing

"On thine own bird the sweet en-  
thusiasm

Which overflows in notes of liquid  
gladness,

Filling the sky like light! How  
many a spasm

"Of fevered brains, oppressed with  
grief and madness,

Were lulled by thee, delightful night-  
ingale!

And these soft waves, murmuring a  
gentle sadness,

"And the far sighings of yon piny dale  
Made vocal by some wind, we feel not  
here.—

I bear alone what nothing may avail

"To lighten—a strange load!"—No  
human ear

Heard this lament; but o'er the  
visage wan

Of Athanase, a ruffling atmosphere

Of dark emotion, a swift shadow ran,  
Like wind upon some forest-bosomed  
lake,

Glassy and dark.—And that divine  
old man

Beheld his mystic friend's whole being  
shake,

Even where its inmost depths were  
gloomiest—

And with a calm and measured voice  
he spake,

And, with a soft and equal pressure,  
prest

That cold lean hand:—"Dost thou  
remember yet

When the curved moon then lingering  
in the west

"Paused, in yon waves her mighty  
horns to wet,

How in those beams we walked, half  
resting on the sea?

'Tis just one year—sure thou dost not  
forget—

"Then Plato's words of light in thee  
and me

Lingered like moonlight in the moon-  
less east,

For we had just then read—thy mem-  
ory

"Is faithful now—the story of the  
feast;

And Agathon and Diotima seemed  
From death and dark forgetfulness  
released."

### FRAGMENT III

'Twas at the season when the Earth  
upsprings

From slumber, as a sphered angel's  
child,

Shadowing its eyes with green and  
golden wings,

Stands up before its mother bright  
and mild,

Of whose soft voice the air expectant  
seems—

So stood before the sun, which shone  
and smiled

To see it rise thus joyous from its  
dreams,

The fresh and radiant Earth. The  
hoary grove

Waxed green—the flowers burst forth  
like starry beams;—

The grass in the warm sun did start  
and move,

And sea-buds burst beneath the waves  
serene:—

How many a one, though none be  
near to love,

Loves then the shade of his own soul,  
half seen

In any mirror—or the spring's young  
minions,  
The winged leaves amid the copses  
green ;—

How many a spirit then puts on the  
pinions  
Of fancy, and outstrips the lagging  
blast,  
And his own steps—and over wide  
dominions

Sweeps in his dream-drawn chariot,  
far and fast,  
More fleet than storms—the wide  
world shrinks below,  
When winter and despondency are  
past.

'Twas at this season that Prince  
Athanase  
Pass'd the white Alps—those eagle-  
baffling mountains  
Slept in their shrouds of snow ;—be-  
side the ways

The waterfalls were voiceless—for  
their fountains  
Were changed to mines of sunless  
crystal now,  
Or by the curdling winds—like brazen  
wings

Which clanged along the mountain's  
marble brow—  
Warped into adamantine fretwork,  
hung  
And filled with frozen light the  
chasm below.

#### FRAGMENT IV

THOU art the wine whose drunkenness  
is all  
We can desire, O Love ! and happy  
souls,  
Ere from thy vine the leaves of au-  
tumn fall,  
Catch thee, and feed from their o'er-  
flowing bowls  
Thousands who thirst for thy am-  
brosial dew ;  
Thou art the radiance which where  
ocean rolls  
Investest it ; and when the heavens  
are blue

Thou fillest them ; and when the  
earth is fair,  
The shadow of thy moving wings im-  
bue

Its deserts and its mountains, till they  
wear  
Beauty like some bright robe ;—thou  
ever soarest  
Among the towers of men, and as soft  
air

In spring, which moves the un-  
awakened forest,  
Clothing with leaves its branches bare  
and bleak,  
Thou floatest among men ; and aye  
impest

That which from thee they should  
implore :—the weak  
Alone kneel to thee, offering up the  
hearts  
The strong have broken—yet where  
shall any seek

A garment whom thou clothest not ?  
MARLOW, 1817.

#### MARIANNE'S DREAM

A PALE dream came to a Lady fair,  
And said, "A boon, a boon, I pray !  
I know the secrets of the air ;  
And things are lost in the glare of  
day,  
Which I can make the sleeping see,  
If they will put their trust in me.

"And thou shalt know of things un-  
known,

If thou wilt let me rest between  
The veiny lids, whose fringe is thrown  
Over thine eyes so dark and sheen":  
And half in hope, and half in fright,  
The Lady closed her eyes so bright.

At first all deadly shapes were driven  
Tumultuously across her sleep,  
And o'er the vast cope of bending  
heaven

All ghastly-visaged clouds did  
sweep ;

And the Lady ever looked to spy  
If the gold sun shone forth on high.

And as towards the east she turned,  
She saw aloft in the morning air,

Which now with hues of sunrise  
burned,  
A great black Anchor rising there ;  
And wherever the Lady turned her  
eyes  
It hung before her in the skies.

The sky was blue as the summer sea,  
The depths were cloudless over-  
head.  
The air was calm as it could be,  
There was no sight nor sound of  
dread,  
But that black Anchor floating still  
Over the piny eastern hill.

The Lady grew sick with a weight of  
fear,  
To see that Anchor ever hanging,  
And veiled her eyes ; she then did  
hear  
The sound as of a dim low clanging,  
And looked abroad if she might know  
Was it aught else, or but the flow  
Of the blood in her own veins, to and  
fro.

There was a mist in the sunless air,  
Which shook as it were with an  
earthquake shock,  
But the very weeds that blossomed  
there  
Were moveless, and each mighty  
rock  
Stood on its basis steadfastly ;  
The Anchor was seen no more on high.

But piled around with summits hid  
In lines of cloud at intervals,  
Stood many a mountain pyramid  
Among whose everlasting walls  
Two mighty cities shone, and ever  
Through the red mists their domes did  
quiver.

On two dread mountains, from whose  
crest,  
Might seem, the eagle for her brood  
Would ne'er have hung her dizzy nest  
Those tower-encircled cities stood.  
A vision strange such towers to see,  
Sculptured and wrought so gor-  
geously,  
Where human art could never be.

And columns framed of marble white,  
And giant fanes, dome over dome

Piled, and triumphant gates, all  
bright  
With workmanship, which could  
not come  
From touch of mortal instrument,  
Shot o'er the vales, or lustre lent  
From its own shapes magnificent.

But still the Lady heard that clang  
Filling the wide air far away ;  
And still the mist whose light did  
hang  
Among the mountains shook alway,  
So that the Lady's heart beat fast,  
As half in joy and half aghast,  
On those high domes her look she  
cast.

Sudden from out that city sprung  
A light that made the earth grow  
red ;  
Two flames that each with quivering  
tongue  
Licked its high domes, and overhead  
Among those mighty towers and  
fanés

Dropped fire, as a volcano rains  
Its sulphurous ruin on the plains.  
And hark ! a rush, as if the deep  
Had burst its bonds ; she looked  
behind

And saw over the western steep  
A raging flood descend, and wind  
Through that wide vale : she felt no  
fear,

But said within herself, " 'Tis clear  
These towers are Nature's own, and  
she

To save them has sent forth the sea."

And now those raging billows came  
Where that fair Lady sate, and she  
Was borne towards the showering  
flame

By the wild waves heaped tumultu-  
ously,

And, on a little plank, the flow  
Of the whirlpool bore her to and fro.

The waves were fiercely vomited  
From every tower and every dome,  
And dreary light did widely shed  
O'er that vast flood's suspended  
foam,

Beneath the smoke which hung its  
night

On the stained cope of heaven's light.

The plank whereon that Lady sate  
 Was driven through the chasms  
 about and about,  
 Between the peaks so desolate  
 Of the drowning mountain, in and  
 out,  
 As the thistle-beard on a whirlwind  
 sails—  
 While the flood was filling those hol-  
 low vales.

At last her plank an eddy crost,  
 And bore her to the city's wall,  
 Which now the flood had reached al-  
 most ;  
 It might the stoutest heart appall  
 To hear the fire roar and hiss  
 Through the domes of those mighty  
 palaces.

The eddy whirled her round and round  
 Before a gorgeous gate, which stood  
 Piercing the clouds of smoke which  
 bound

Its æry arch with light like blood ;  
 She looked on that gate of marble  
 clear  
 With wonder that extinguished fear.

For it was filled with sculptures rarest  
 Of forms most beautiful and  
 strange,  
 Like nothing human, but the fairest  
 Of winged shapes, whose legions  
 range  
 Throughout the sleep of those who are,  
 Like this same Lady, good and fair.

And as she looked, still lovelier grew  
 Those marble forms ; the sculptor  
 sure

Was a strong spirit, and the hue  
 Of his own mind did there endure  
 After the touch, whose power had  
 braided  
 Such grace, was in some sad change  
 faded.

She looked, the flames were dim, the  
 flood  
 Grew tranquil as a woodland river  
 Winding through hills in solitude ;  
 Those marble shapes then seemed to  
 quiver  
 And their fair limbs to float in motion,  
 Like weeds unfolding in the ocean.

And their lips moved ; one seemed to  
 speak,  
 When suddenly the mountain  
 crackt,  
 And through the chasm the floor did  
 break  
 With an earth-uplifting cataract :  
 The statues gave a joyous scream,  
 And on its wings the pale thin dream  
 Lifted the Lady from the stream.

The dizzy flight of that phantom pale  
 Waked the fair Lady from her sleep,  
 And she arose, while from the veil  
 Of her dark eyes the dream did  
 creep ;  
 And she walked about as one who  
 knew  
 That sleep has sights as clear and true  
 As any waking eyes can view.

## DEATH

THEY die—the dead return not.—  
 Misery  
 Sits near an open grave and calls  
 them over,  
 A youth with hoary hair and haggard  
 eye—  
 They are names of kindred, friend  
 and lover,  
 Which he so feebly calls—they all are  
 gone !  
 Fond wretch, all dead, those vacant  
 names alone,  
 This most familiar scene, my  
 pain—  
 These tombs alone remain.

Misery, my sweetest friend—oh !  
 weep no more !  
 Thou wilt not be consoled—I  
 wonder not ;  
 For I have seen thee from thy dwell-  
 ing's door  
 Watch the calm sunset with  
 them, and this spot  
 Was even as bright and calm, but  
 transitory,  
 And now thy hopes are gone, thy  
 hair is hoary ;  
 This most familiar scene, my  
 pain—  
 These tombs alone remain.

## TO CONSTANTIA

## SINGING

Thus to be lost and thus to sink and die,

Perchance were death indeed !—

Constantia, turn !

In thy dark eyes a power like light doth lie,

Even though the sounds which were thy voice, which burn

Between thy lips, are laid to sleep ;

Within thy breath, and on thy hair, like odour, it is yet,

And from thy touch like fire doth leap.

Even while I write, my burning cheeks are wet,

Alas, that the torn heart can bleed, but not forget !

A breathless awe, like the swift change Unseen but felt in youthful slumbers,

Wild, sweet, but uncommunicably strange,

Thou breathest now in fast ascending numbers.

The cope of heaven seems rent and cloven

By the enchantment of thy strain,

And on my shoulders wings are woven,

To follow its sublime career,

Beyond the mighty moons that wane Upon the verge of nature's utmost sphere,

Till the world's shadowy walls are passèd and disappear.

Her voice is hovering o'er my soul—it lingers

O'ershadowing it with soft and lulling wings,

The blood and life within those snowy fingers

Teach witchcraft to the instrumental strings.

My brain is wild, my breath comes quick—

The blood is listening in my frame, And thronging shadows, fast and thick,

Fall on my overflowing eyes ;

My heart is quivering like a flame ;

As morning dew, that in the sun-beam dies,

I am dissolved in these consuming ecstasies.

I have no life, Constantia, now, but thee,

Whilst, like the world-surrounding air, thy song

Flows on, and fills all things with melody.—

Now is thy voice a tempest swift and strong,

On which, like one in trance upborne, Secure o'er rocks and waves I sweep,

Rejoicing like a cloud of morn.

Now 'tis the breath of summer night,

Which, when the starry waters sleep, Round western isles, with incense-blossoms bright

Lingering, suspends my soul in its voluptuous flight.

## TO CONSTANTIA

THE rose that drinks the fountain dew

In the pleasant air of noon,

Grows pale and blue with altered hue—

In the gaze of the nightly moon ;

For the planet of frost, so cold and bright,

Makes it wan with her borrowed light.

Such is my heart—roses are fair,

And that at best a withered blossom ;

But thy false care did idly wear

Its withered leaves in a faithless bosom !

And fed with love, like air and dew,

Its growth—

## SONNET.—OZYMANDIAS

I MET a traveller from an antique land

Who said : Two vast and trunkless legs of stone

Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,

Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,

And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command.

Tell that its sculptor well those passions read

Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things.

The hand that mocked them and the  
heart that fed ;  
And on the pedestal these words appear :  
" My name is Ozymandias, king of  
kings :  
Look on my works, ye mighty, and  
despair ! "  
Nothing beside remains. Round the  
decay  
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and  
bare,  
The lone and level sands stretch far  
away.

## TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR

Thy country's curse is on thee, darkest  
crest  
Of that foul, knotted, many-headed  
worm  
Which rends our Mother's bosom—  
priestly pest !  
Masked resurrection of a buried  
form !

Thy country's curse is on thee !  
Justice sold,  
Truth trampled, Nature's land-  
marks overthrown,  
And heaps of fraud-accumulated gold,  
Plead, loud as thunder, at De-  
struction's throne.

And, whilst that slow sure Angel  
which aye stands  
Watching the beck of Mutability  
Delays to execute her high commands,  
And, though a nation weeps, spares  
thine and thee ;

Oh let a father's curse be on thy soul,  
And let a daughter's hope be on thy  
tomb,

And both on thy grey head a leaden  
cowl

To weigh thee down to thine ap-  
proaching doom !

I curse thee by a parent's outraged  
love ;

By hopes long cherished and too  
lately lost ;

By gentle feelings thou couldst never  
prove ;

By griefs which thy stern nature  
never crossed ;

By those infantine smiles, of happy  
light

Which were a fire within a stranger's  
hearth,

Quenched even when kindled, in un-  
timely night

Hiding the promise of a lovely  
birth ;

By those unpractised accents of young  
speech,

Which he who is a father thought  
to frame

To gentlest lore such as the wisest  
teach.

Thou strike the lyre of mind ! Oh  
grief and shame !

By all the happy see in children's  
growth,

That undeveloped flower of bud-  
ding years,

Sweetness and sadness interwoven  
both,

Source of the sweetest hopes and  
saddest fears ;

By all the days, under a hireling's  
care,

Of dull constraint and bitter heavi-  
ness,—

Oh wretched ye if ever any were,  
Sadder than orphans yet not  
fatherless !—

By the false cant which on their inno-  
cent lips

Must hang like poison on an open-  
ing bloom ;

By the dark creeds which cover with  
eclipse

Their pathway from the cradle to  
the tomb ;

By thy most impious hell, and all its  
terrors ;

By all the grief, the madness, and  
the guilt

Of thine impostures, which must be  
their errors,

That sand on which thy crumbling  
power is built ;

By thy complicity with lust and hate,  
Thy thirst for tears, thy hunger

after gold,

The ready frauds which never on thee  
wait,

The servile arts in which thou hast  
grown old ;

By thy most killing sneer, and by thy  
smile,

By all the acts and snares of thy  
black den,  
And—for thou canst outweep the  
crocodile—

By thy false tears, those millstones  
braining men ;

By all the hate which checks a father's  
love ;

By all the scorn which kills a  
father's care ;

By those most impious hands that  
dared remove

Nature's high bounds ; by thee ;  
and by despair ;—

Yes, the despair which bids a father  
groan,

And cry, " My children are no  
longer mine ;

The blood within those veins may be  
mine own,

But, tyrant, their polluted souls are  
thine ! "—

I curse thee, though I hate thee not.  
O slave !

If thou couldst quench the earth-  
consuming hell

Of which thou art a demon, on thy  
grave

This curse should be a blessing.  
Fare thee well !

#### LINES TO A CRITIC

HONEY from silkworms who can  
gather,

Or silk from the yellow bee ?

The grass may grow in winter weather  
As soon as hate in me,

Hate men who cant, and men who  
prate,

And men who rail like thee ;

An equal passion to repay

They are not coy like me,

Or seek some slave of power and gold,

To be thy dear heart's mate ;

Thy love will move that bigot cold,

Sooner than me thy hate.

A passion like the one I prove

Cannot divided be ;

I hate thy want of truth and love—

How should I then hate thee ?

#### LINES

THAT time is dead for ever, child,

Drowned, frozen, dead for ever !

We look on the past,

And stare aghast

At the spectres wailing, pale, and  
ghast,

Of hopes which thou and I beguiled

To death on life's dark river.

The stream we gazed on then rolled  
by ;

Its waves are unreturning ;

But we yet stand

In a lone land,

Like tombs to mark the memory

Of hopes and fears, which fade and flee

In the light of life's dim morning.

#### ON FANNY GODWIN

HER voice did quiver as we parted,

Yet knew I not that heart was  
broken

From which it came, and I departed

Heeding not the words then spoken,

Misery—O Misery,

This world is all too wide for  
thee.

# POEMS WRITTEN IN 1818

## ADVERTISEMENT

TO ROSALIND AND HELEN, AND LINES  
WRITTEN AMONG THE EUGANEAN  
HILLS.

NAPLES, Dec. 20, 1818.

THE story of ROSALIND AND HELEN is, undoubtedly, not an attempt in the highest style of poetry. It is in no degree calculated to excite profound meditation; and if, by interesting the affections and amusing the imagination, it awaken a certain ideal melancholy favourable to the reception of more important impressions, it will produce in the reader all that the writer experienced in the composition. I resigned myself, as I wrote, to the impulse of the feelings which moulded the conception of the story; and this impulse determined the pauses of a measure, which only pretends to be regular, inasmuch as it corresponds with, and expresses, the irregularity of the imaginations which inspire it.

I do not know which of the few scattered poems I left in England will be selected by my bookseller to add to this collection. One, which I sent from Italy, was written after a day's excursion among those lovely mountains which surround what was once the retreat, and where is now the sepulchre, of Petrarch. If anyone is inclined to condemn the insertion of the introductory lines, which image forth the sudden relief of a state of deep despondency by the radiant visions disclosed by the sudden burst of an Italian sunrise in autumn, on the highest peak of those delightful mountains, I can only offer as my excuse, that they were not erased at the request of a dear friend, with whom added years of intercourse only add to my apprehension of its value, and who would have had

S.P.

more right than anyone to complain, that she has not been able to extinguish in me the very power of delineating sadness.

## ROSALIND AND HELEN

SCENE.—*The Shore of the Lake of Como.*

ROSALIND, HELEN, and her Child.

HELEN.

Come hither, my sweet Rosalind.  
'Tis long since thou and I have met :  
And yet methinks it were unkind  
Those moments to forget.  
Come, sit by me. I see thee stand  
By this lone lake, in this far land,  
Thy loose hair in the light wind flying,  
Thy sweet voice to each tone of even  
United, and thine eyes replying  
To the hues of yon fair heaven.  
Come, gentle friend ! wilt sit by me ?  
And be as thou wert wont to be  
Ere we were disunited ?  
None doth behold us now : the power  
That led us forth at this lone hour  
Will be but ill requited  
If thou depart in scorn : oh ! come  
And talk of our abandoned home.  
Remember, this is Italy,  
And we are exiles. Talk with me  
Of that our land, whose wilds and  
floods,  
Barren and dark although they be,  
Were dearer than these chestnut  
woods ;  
Those heathy paths, that inland  
stream,  
And the blue mountains, shapes which  
seem  
Like wrecks of childhood's sunny  
dream :  
Which that we have abandoned now,  
Weighs on the heart like that remorse  
Which altered friendship leaves. I  
seek  
No more our youthful intercourse.

X



That cannot be! Rosalind, speak,  
 Speak to me. Leave me not.—When  
 morn did come,  
 When evening fell upon our common  
 home,  
 When for one hour we parted,—do  
 not frown;  
 I would not chide thee, though thy  
 faith is broken;  
 But turn to me. Oh! by this cher-  
 ished token  
 Of woven hair, which thou wilt not  
 disown,  
 Turn, as 'twere but the memory of me,  
 And not my scorned self who prayed  
 to thee.

ROSALIND.

Is it a dream, or do I see  
 And hear frail Helen? I would flee  
 Thy tainting touch; but former years  
 Arise, and bring forbidden tears;  
 And my o'erburthened memory  
 Seeks yet its lost repose in thee.  
 I share thy crime. I cannot choose  
 But weep for thee: mine own strange  
 grief

But seldom stoops to such relief;  
 Nor ever did I love thee less,  
 Though mourning o'er thy wickedness  
 Even with a sister's woe. I knew  
 What to the evil world is due,  
 And therefore sternly did refuse  
 To link me with the infamy  
 Of one so lost as Helen. Now  
 Bewildered by my dire despair,  
 Wondering I blush and weep that  
 thou

\*Shouldst love me still,—thou only!—  
 There,

Let us sit on that grey stone,  
 Till our mournful talk be done.

HELEN.

Alas! not there; I cannot bear  
 The murmur of this lake to hear.  
 A sound from thee, Rosalind dear,  
 Which never yet I heard elsewhere  
 But in our native land, recurs,  
 Even here where now we meet. It  
 stirs

Too much of suffocating sorrow!  
 In the dell of yon dark chestnut wood  
 Is a stone seat, a solitude  
 Less like our own. The ghost of peace  
 Will not desert this spot. To-mor-  
 row,

If thy kind feelings should not cease,  
 We may sit here.

ROSALIND.

Thou lead, my sweet,  
 And I will follow.

HENRY.

'Tis Fenici's seat  
 Where you are going?—This is not  
 the way,  
 Mamma; it leads behind those trees  
 that grow  
 Close to the little river.

HELEN.

Yes; I know;  
 I was bewildered. Kiss me, and be  
 gay,  
 Dear boy, why do you sob?

HENRY.

I do not know:  
 But it might break anyone's heart to  
 see  
 You and the lady cry so bitterly.

HELEN.

It is a gentle child, my friend. Go  
 home,  
 Henry, and play with Lilla till I  
 come.  
 We only cried with joy to see each  
 other;  
 We are quite merry now—Good  
 night.

The boy  
 Lifted a sudden look upon his mother,  
 And in the gleam of forced and hollow  
 joy

Which lightened o'er her face  
 laughed with the glee  
 Of light and unsuspecting infancy,  
 And whispered in her ear, "Bring  
 home with you

That sweet, strange, lady-friend."  
 Then off he flew,  
 But stopped, and beckoned with a  
 meaning smile,  
 Where the road turned. Pale Rosa-  
 lind the while,  
 Hiding her face, stood weeping  
 silently.

In silence then they took the way  
 Beneath the forest's solitude.  
 It was a vast and antique wood,  
 Through which they took their way;  
 And the grey shades of evening

O'er that green wilderness did fling  
 Still deeper solitude.  
 Pursuing still the path that wound  
 The vast and knotted trees around,  
 Through which slow shades were  
 wandering,  
 To a deep lawny dell they came,  
 To a stone seat beside a spring,  
 O'er which the columned wood did  
 frame  
 A roofless temple, like the fane  
 Where, ere new creeds could faith  
 obtain,  
 Man's early race once knelt beneath  
 The overhanging deity.  
 O'er this fair fountain hung the sky,  
 Now spangled with rare stars. The  
 snake,  
 The pale snake, that with eager  
 breath  
 Creeps here his noontide thirst to  
 slake,  
 Is beaming with many a mingled hue,  
 Shed from yon dome's eternal blue,  
 When he floats on that dark and lucid  
 flood  
 In the light of his own loveliness ;  
 And the birds that in the fountain dip  
 Their plumes, with fearless fellow-  
 ship  
 Above and round him wheel and  
 hover.  
 The fitful wind is heard to stir  
 One solitary leaf on high ;  
 The chirping of the grasshopper  
 Fills every pause. There is emotion  
 In all that dwells at noontide here :  
 Then, through the intricate wild  
 wood,  
 A maze of life and light and motion  
 Is woven. But there is stillness now ;  
 Gloom, and the trance of Nature now ;  
 The snake is in his cave asleep ;  
 The birds are on the branches dream-  
 ing ;  
 Only the shadows creep ;  
 Only the glow worm is gleaming :  
 Only the owls and the nightingales  
 Wake in this dell when daylight fails,  
 And grey shades gather in the woods ;  
 And the owls have all fled far away  
 In a merrier glen to hoot and play,  
 For the moon is veiled and sleeping  
 now.  
 The accustomed nightingale still  
 broods

On her accustomed bough,  
 But she is mute ; for her false mate  
 Has fled and left her desolate.  
 This silent spot tradition old  
 Had peopled with the spectral dead.  
 For the roots of the speaker's hair  
 felt cold  
 And stiff, as with tremulous lips he  
 told  
 That a hellish shape at midnight led  
 The ghost of a youth with hoary hair,  
 And sate on the seat beside him there,  
 Till a naked child came wandering by,  
 When the fiend would change to a  
 lady fair !  
 A fearful tale ! The truth was worse :  
 For here a sister and a brother  
 Had solemnised a monstrous curse,  
 Meeting in this fair solitude :  
 For beneath yon very sky,  
 Had they resigned to one another  
 Body and soul. The multitude,  
 Tracking them to the secret wood,  
 Tore limb from limb their innocent  
 child,  
 And stabbed and trampled on its  
 mother ;  
 But the youth, for God's most holy  
 grace,  
 A priest saved to burn in the market-  
 place.  
 Duly at evening Helen came  
 To this lone silent spot,  
 From the wrecks of a tale of wilder  
 sorrow  
 So much of sympathy to borrow  
 As soothed her own dark lot.  
 Duly each evening from her home,  
 With her fair child would Helen come  
 To sit upon that antique seat,  
 While the hues of day were pale ;  
 And the bright boy beside her feet  
 Now lay, lifting at intervals  
 His broad blue eyes on her ;  
 Now, where some sudden impulse  
 calls  
 Following. He was a gentle boy  
 And in all gentle sports took joy ;  
 Oft in a dry leaf for a boat,  
 With a small feather for a sail,  
 His fancy on that spring would float,  
 If some invisible breeze might stir  
 Its marble calm : and Helen smiled  
 Through tears of awe on the gay child,  
 To think that a boy as fair as he,

In years which never more may be,  
By that same fount, in that same  
wood,

The like sweet fancies had pursued ;  
And that a mother, lost like her,  
Had mournfully sate watching him.  
Then all the scene was wont to swim  
Through the mist of a burning tear.

For many months had Helen known  
This scene ; and now she thither  
turned

Her footsteps, not alone.  
The friend whose falsehood she had  
mourned,

Sate with her on that seat of stone.  
Silent they sate ; for evening,  
And the power its glimpses bring  
Had, with one awful shadow, quelled  
The passion of their grief. They sate  
With linked hands, for unrepelled  
Had Helen taken Rosalind's.

Like the autumn wind, when it un-  
binds

The tangled locks of the nightshade's  
hair,

Which is twined in the sultry summer  
air

Round the walls of an outworn sepul-  
chre,

Did the voice of Helen, sad and sweet,  
And the sound of her heart that ever  
beat,

As with sighs and words she breathed  
on her,

Unbind the knots of her friend's  
despair,

Till her thoughts were free to float and  
flow ;

And from her labouring bosom now,  
Like the bursting of a prisoned flame,  
The voice of a long-pent sorrow came.

ROSALIND.

I saw the dark earth fall upon  
The coffin ; and I saw the stone  
Laid over him whom this cold breast  
Had pillowed to his nightly rest !  
Thou knowest not, thou canst not  
know

My agony. Oh ! I could not weep :  
The sources whence such blessings  
flow

Were not to be approached by me !  
But I could smile, and I could sleep,  
Though with a self-accusing heart.  
In morning's light, in evening's gloom,

I watched,—and would not thence  
depart,—

My husband's unlamented tomb. -  
My children knew their sire was gone ;  
But when I told them, " he is dead,"  
They laughed aloud in frantic glee,  
They clapped their hands and leaped  
about,

Answering each other's ecstasy  
With many a prank and merry shout ;  
But I sat silent and alone,  
Wrapped in the mock of mourning  
weed.

They laughed, for he was dead ; but I  
Sate with a hard and tearless eye,  
And with a heart which would deny  
The secret joy it could not quell,  
Low muttering o'er his loathed name ;  
Till from that self-contention came  
Remorse where sin was none ; a hell  
Which in pure spirits should not  
dwell.

I'll tell the truth. He was a man  
Hard, selfish, loving only gold,  
Yet full of guile ; his pale eyes ran  
With tears, which each some false-  
hood told,

And oft his smooth and bridled tongue  
Would give the lie to his flushing  
cheek :

He was a coward to the strong ;  
He was a tyrant to the weak,  
On whom his vengeance he would  
wreak :

For scorn, whose arrows search the  
heart,

From many a stranger's eye would  
dart,

And on his memory cling, and follow  
His soul to its home so cold and  
hollow.

He was a tyrant to the weak,  
And we were such, alas the day !  
Oft, when my little ones at play,  
Were in youth's natural lightness  
gay,

Or if they listened to some tale  
Of travellers, or of fairy land,—  
When the light from the wood fire's  
dying brand

Flashed on their faces,—if they heard  
Or thought they heard upon the stair  
His footstep, the suspended word  
Died on my lips : we all grew pale ;

The babe at my bosom was hushed  
 with fear  
 If it thought it heard its father near ;  
 And my two wild boys would near my  
 knee  
 Cling, cowed and cowering fearfully.  
 I'll tell the truth : I loved another.  
 His name in my ear was ever ringing,  
 His form to my brain was ever cling-  
 ing ;  
 Yet if some stranger breathed that  
 name,  
 My lips turned white, and my heart  
 beat fast ;  
 My nights were once haunted by  
 dreams of flame,  
 My days were dim in the shadow cast,  
 By the memory of the same !  
 Day and night, day and night,  
 He was my breath and life and light,  
 For three short years, which soon  
 were past.  
 On the fourth, my gentle mother  
 Led me to the shrine, to be  
 His sworn bride eternally.  
 And now we stood on the altar stair,  
 When my father came from a distant  
 land,  
 And with a loud and fearful cry,  
 Rushed between us suddenly.  
 I saw the stream of his thin grey hair,  
 I saw his lean and lifted hand,  
 And heard his words,—and live ! O  
 God !  
 Wherefore do I live ?—" Hold, hold !"  
 He cried,—“ I tell thee 'tis her bro-  
 ther !  
 Thy mother, boy, beneath the sod  
 Of yon churchyard rests in her  
 shroud so cold.  
 I am now weak, and pale, and old :  
 We were once dear to one another,  
 I and that corpse ! Thou art our  
 child ! ”  
 Then with a laugh both long and wild  
 The youth upon the pavement fell :  
 They found him dead ! All looked  
 on me,  
 The spasms of my despair to see ;  
 But I was calm. I went away ;  
 I was clammy-cold like clay !  
 I did not weep—I did not speak ;  
 But day by day, week after week,  
 I walked about like a corpse alive !  
 Alas ! sweet friend, you must believe  
 This heart is stone—it did not break.

My father lived a little while,  
 But all might see that he was dying,  
 He smiled with such a woeful smile !  
 When he was in the churchyard lying  
 Among the worms, we grew quite  
 poor,  
 So that no one would give us bread ;  
 My mother looked at me, and said  
 Faint words of cheer, which only  
 meant  
 That she could die and be content ;  
 So I went forth from the same church  
 door  
 To another husband's bed.  
 And this was he who died at last,  
 When weeks and months and years  
 had past,  
 Through which I firmly did fulfil  
 My duties, a devoted wife,  
 With the stern step of vanquish'd  
 will,  
 Walking beneath the night of life,  
 Whose hours extinguished, like slow  
 rain  
 Falling for ever, pain by pain ;  
 The very hope of death's dear rest ;  
 Which, since the heart within my  
 breast  
 Of natural life was dispossessed,  
 Its strange sustainer there had been.  
 When flowers were dead, and grass  
 was green  
 Upon my mother's grave,—that  
 mother  
 Whom to outlive, and cheer, and  
 make  
 My wan eyes glitter for her sake,  
 Was my vowed task, the single care  
 Which once gave life to my despair,—  
 When she was a thing that did not  
 stir,  
 And the crawling worms were cradling  
 her  
 To a sleep more deep and so more  
 sweet  
 Than a baby's rocked on its nurse's  
 knee,  
 I lived ; a living pulse then beat  
 Beneath my heart that awakened  
 me.  
 What was this pulse so warm and  
 free ?  
 Alas ! I knew it could not be  
 My own dull blood : 'twas like a  
 thought

Of liquid love, that spread and wrought

Under my bosom and in my brain,  
And crept with the blood through every vein,

And hour by hour, day after day,  
The wonder could not charm away,  
But laid in sleep my wakeful pain,  
Until I knew it was a child,  
And then I wept. For long, long years

These frozen eyes had shed no tears :  
But now—'twas the season fair and mild

When April has wept itself to May :  
I sate through the sweet sunny day  
By my window bowered round with leaves

And down my cheeks the quick tears ran [caves,

Like twinkling rain-drops from the  
When warm spring showers are passing o'er :

O Helen, none can ever tell  
The joy it was to weep once more !

I wept to think how hard it were  
To kill my babe, and take from it  
The sense of light, and the warm air,  
And my own fond and tender care,  
And love and smiles ; ere I knew yet  
That these for it might, as for me,  
Be the masks of a grinning mockery.  
And haply, I would dream, 'twere sweet

To feed it from my faded breast,  
Or mark my own heart's restless beat  
Rock it to its untroubled rest ;  
And watch the growing soul beneath  
Dawn in faint smiles ; and hear its breath,

Half interrupted by calm sighs ;  
And search the depth of its fair eyes  
For long departed memories !  
And so I lived till that sweet load  
Was lightened. Darkly forward flowed

The stream of years, and on it bore  
Two shapes of gladness to my sight ;  
Two other babes, delightful more  
In my lost soul's abandoned night,  
Than their own country ships may be  
Sailing towards wrecked mariners,  
Who cling to the rock of a wintry sea.  
For each, as it came, brought soothing tears,

And a loosening warmth, as each one lay

Sucking the sullen milk away,  
About my frozen heart did play,  
And weaned it, oh how painfully !—  
As they themselves were weaned each one

From that sweet food,—even from the thirst

Of death, and nothingness, and rest,  
Strange inmate of a living breast !  
Which all that I had undergone  
Of grief and shame, since she, who first

The gates of that dark refuge closed,  
Came to my sight, and almost burst  
The seal of that Lethean spring ;  
But these fair shadows interposed :  
For all delights are shadows now !  
And from my brain to my dull brow  
The heavy tears gather and flow :  
I cannot speak—Oh let me weep !

The tears which fell from her wan eyes  
Glimmered among the moonlight dew !

Her deep hard sobs and heavy sighs  
Their echoes in the darkness threw.  
When she grew calm, she thus did keep

The tenor of her tale :—

He died,  
I know not how. He was not old,  
If age be numbered by its years ;  
But he was bowed and bent with fears.  
Pale with the quenchless thirst of gold,  
Which, like fierce fever, left him weak ;

And his strait lip and bloated cheek  
Were warped in spasms by hollow sneers ;

And selfish cares with barren plough,  
Not age, had lined his narrow brow,  
And foul and cruel thoughts, which feed

Upon the withering life within,  
Like vipers on some poisonous weed.  
Whether his ill were death or sin  
None knew, until he died indeed,  
And then men owned they were the same.

Seven days within my chamber lay  
That corse, and my babes made holiday :

At last, I told them what is death :

The eldest with a kind of shame,  
Came to my knees with silent breath,  
And sate awe-stricken at my feet ;  
And soon the others left their play,  
And sate there too. It is unmeet  
To shed on the brief flower of youth  
The withering knowledge of the  
grave ;

From me remorse then wrung that  
truth.

I could not bear the joy which gave  
Too just a response to mine own.  
In vain. I dared not feign a groan ;  
And in their artless looks I saw,  
Between the mists, of fear and awe,  
That my own thought was theirs ;  
and they

Expressed it not in words, but said,  
Each in its heart, how every day  
Will pass in happy work and play,  
Now he is dead and gone away !

After the funeral all our kin  
Assembled, and the will was read.  
My friend, I tell thee, even the dead  
Have strength, their putrid shrouds  
within,

To blast and torture. Those who  
live

Still fear the living, but a corse  
Is merciless, and power doth give  
To such pale tyrants half the spoil  
He rends from those who groan and  
toil,

Because they blush not with remorse  
Among their crawling worms. Be-  
hold,

I have no child ! my tale grows old  
With grief, and staggers : let it reach  
The limits of my feeble speech,  
And languidly at length recline  
On the brink of its own grave and  
mine.

Thou knowest what a thing is  
Poverty

Among the fallen on evil days :  
'Tis Crime, and Fear, and Infamy,  
And houseless Want in frozen ways  
Wandering ungarmented, and Pain,  
And, worse than all, that inward  
stain,

Foul Self-contempt, which drowns in  
sneers

Youth's starlight smile, and makes  
its tears

First like hot gall, then dry for ever !

And well thou knowest a mother  
never

Could doom her children to this ill,  
And well he knew the same. The will  
Imported, that if e'er again  
I sought my children to behold,  
Or in my birthplace did remain  
Beyond three days, whose hours were  
told,

They should inherit nought : and he,  
To whom next came their patrimony,  
A sallow lawyer, cruel and cold,  
Aye watched me, as the will was read,  
With eyes askance, which sought to  
see

The secrets of my agony ;  
And with close lips and anxious brow  
Stood canvassing still to and fro  
The chance of my resolve, and all  
The dead man's caution just did call ;  
For in that killing lie 'twas said—

"She is adulterous, and doth hold  
In secret that the Christian creed  
Is false, and therefore is much need  
That I should have a care to save  
My children from eternal fire."

Friend, he was sheltered by the grave,  
And therefore dared to be a liar !

In truth, the Indian on the pyre  
Of her dead husband, half-consumed,  
As well might there be false, as I  
To those abhorred embraces doomed,  
Far worse than fire's brief agony.

As to the Christian creed, if true  
Or false, I never questioned it :  
I took it as the vulgar do :  
Nor my vexed soul had leisure yet  
To doubt the things men say, or deem  
That they are other than they seem.

All present who those crimes did hear  
In feigned or actual scorn and fear,  
Men, women, children, slunk away,  
Whispering with self-contented pride,  
Which half suspects its own base lie.  
I spoke to none, nor did abide,  
But silently I went my way,  
Nor noticed I where joyously  
Sate my two younger babes at play,  
In the courtyard through which I  
past :

But went with footsteps firm and fast  
Till I came to the brink of the ocean  
green,

And there, a woman with grey hairs,  
Who had my mother's servant been,

Kneeling, with many tears and prayers,  
Made me accept a purse of gold,  
Half of the earnings she had kept  
To refuge her when weak and old.

With woe, which never sleeps or slept,  
I wander now. 'Tis a vain thought—  
But on yon Alp, whose snowy head  
'Mid the azure air is islanded  
(We see it o'er the flood of cloud,  
Which sunrise from its eastern caves  
Drives, wrinkling into golden waves,  
Hung with its precipices proud,  
From that grey stone where first we  
met),

There, now who knows the dead feel  
nought,  
Should be my grave; for he who yet  
Is my soul's soul, once said: " 'Twere  
sweet

'Mid stars and lightnings to abide,  
And winds and lulling snows, that  
beat

With their soft flakes the mountain  
wide,

When weary meteor lamps repose,  
And, languid storms their pinious  
close:

And all things strong and bright and  
pure,

And ever during, aye endure:  
Who knows, if one were buried there,  
But these things might our spirits  
make,

Amid the all-surrounding air,  
Their own eternity partake?"

Then 'twas a wild and playful saying  
At which I laughed or seemed to  
laugh:

They were his words: now heed my  
praying,

And let them be my epitaph.

Thy memory for a term may be  
My monument. Wilt remember me?  
I know thou wilt, and canst forgive  
Whilst in this erring world to live  
My soul disdained not, that I thought  
Its lying forms were worthy aught,  
And much less thee.

HELEN.

O speak not so,  
But come to me and pour thy woe  
Into this heart, full though it be,  
Aye overflowing with its own:

I thought that grief had severed me  
From all beside who weep and groan;  
Its likeness upon earth to be,  
Its express image; but thou art  
More wretched. Sweet! we will not  
part

Henceforth, if death be not division;  
If so, the dead feel no contrition.

But wilt thou hear, since last we  
parted

All that has left me broken-hearted?

ROSALIND.

Yes, speak. The faintest stars are  
scarcely shorn

Of their thin beams, by that delusive  
morn

Which sinks again in darkness, like  
the light

Of early love, soon lost in total night.

HELEN.

Alas! Italian winds are mild,  
But my bosom is cold—wintry cold—  
When the warm air weaves, among  
the fresh leaves,

Soft music, my poor brain is wild,  
And I am weak like a nursing child,  
Though my soul with grief is grey and  
old.

ROSALIND.

Weep not at thine own words, tho'  
they must make

Me weep. What is thy tale?

HELEN.

I fear 'twill shake  
Thy gentle heart with tears. Thou  
well

Rememberest when we met no more,  
And, though I dwelt with Lionel,  
That friendless caution pierced me  
sore

With grief—a wound my spirit bore  
Indignantly; but when he died,  
With him lay dead both hope and  
pride.

Alas! all hope is buried now.  
But then men dreamed the aged earth  
Was labouring in that mighty birth,  
Which many a poet and a sage  
Has aye foreseen—the happy age  
When truth and love shall dwell below  
Among the works and ways of men;  
Which on this world not power but  
will

Even now is wanting to fulfil.  
 Among mankind what thence befel  
 Of strife, how vain, is known too well ;  
 When Liberty's dear pæan fell  
 'Mid murderous howls. To Lionel,  
 Though of great wealth and lineage  
 high,  
 Yet through those dungeon walls there  
 came  
 Thy thrilling light, O Liberty !  
 And as the meteor's midnight flame  
 Startles the dreamer, sunlight truth  
 Flashed on his visionary youth,  
 And filled him, not with love, but  
 faith,  
 And hope, and courage mute in  
 death ;  
 For love and life in him were twins,  
 Born at one birth : in every other  
 First life, then love its course begins,  
 Though they be children of one  
 mother ;  
 And so through this dark world they  
 fleet  
 Divided, till in death they meet :  
 But he loved all things ever. Then  
 He passed amid the strife of men,  
 And stood at the throne of armed  
 power  
 Pleading for a world of woe :  
 Secure as one on a rock-built tower  
 O'er the wrecks which the surge trails  
 to and fro,  
 'Mid the passions wild of humankind  
 He stood, like a spirit calming them ;  
 For, it was said, his words could bind  
 Like music the lulled crowd, and stem  
 That torrent of unquiet dream  
 Which mortals truth and reason  
 deem,  
 But is revenge, and fear, and pride.  
 Joyous he was ; and hope and peace  
 On all who heard him did abide,  
 Raining like dew from his sweet talk,  
 As where the evening star may walk  
 Along the brink of the gloomy seas,  
 Liquid mists of splendour quiver.  
 His very gestures touched to tears  
 The unpersuaded tyrant, never  
 So moved before : his presence stung  
 The torturers with their victims' pain,  
 And none knew how ; and through  
 their ears,  
 The subtle witchcraft of his tongue  
 Unlocked the hearts of those who  
 keep

Gold, the world's bond of slavery.  
 Men wondered and some sneered to  
 see  
 One sow what he could never reap :  
 For he is rich, they said, and young,  
 And might drink from the depths of  
 luxury.  
 If he seeks fame, fame never crowned  
 The champion of a trampled creed :  
 If he seeks power, power is enthroned  
 'Mid ancient rights and wrongs, to  
 feed  
 Which hungry wolves with praise and  
 spoil,  
 Those who would sit near power must  
 toil ;  
 And such, there sitting, all may see.  
 What seeks he ? All that others  
 seek  
 He casts away, like a vile weed  
 Which the sea casts unreturningly.  
 That poor and hungry men should  
 break  
 The laws which wreak them toil and  
 scorn,  
 We understand ; but Lionel  
 We know is rich and nobly born.  
 So wondered they ; yet all men loved  
 Young Lionel, though few approved ;  
 All but the priests, whose hatred fell  
 Like the unseen blight of a smiling  
 day,  
 The withering honey-dew, which  
 clings  
 Under the bright green buds of May,  
 Whilst they unfold their emerald  
 wings :  
 For he made verses wild and queer  
 On the strange creeds priests hold so  
 dear,  
 Because they bring them land and  
 gold.  
 Of devils and saints, and all such gear,  
 He made tales which whoso heard or  
 read  
 Would laugh till he were almost dead.  
 So this grew a proverb : " Don't get  
 old  
 Till Lionel's ' Banquet in Hell ' you  
 hear,  
 And then you will laugh yourself  
 young again."  
 So the priests hated him ; and he  
 Repaid their hate with cheerful glee.  
 Ah ! smiles and joyance quickly died,



For public hope grew pale and dim  
 In an altered time and tide,  
 And in its wasting withered him,  
 As a summer flower that blows too soon  
 Droops in the smile of the waning moon,  
 When it scatters through an April night  
 The frozen dews of wrinkling blight.  
 None now hoped more. Grey Power  
 was seated  
 Safely on her ancestral throne ;  
 And Faith, the Python, undefeated  
 Even to its blood-stained steps  
 dragged on  
 Her foul and wounded train ; and men  
 Were trampled and deceived again,  
 And words and shows again could bind  
 The wailing tribes of humankind  
 In scorn and famine. Fire and blood  
 Raged round the raging multitude,  
 To fields remote by tyrants sent  
 To be the scorned instrument,  
 With which they drag from mines of gore  
 The chains their slaves yet ever wore ;  
 And in the streets men met each other,  
 And by old altars and in halls,  
 And smiled again at festivals.  
 But each man found in his heart's brother  
 Cold cheer ; for all, though half deceived,  
 The outworn creeds again believed,  
 And the same round anew began,  
 Which the weary world yet ever ran.  
 Many then wept, not tears, but gall,  
 Within their hearts, like drops which fall  
 Wasting the fountain-stone away.  
 And in that dark and evil day  
 Did all desires and thoughts, that claim  
 Men's care—ambition, friendship, fame,  
 Love, hope, though hope was now despair—  
 Indue the colours of this change,  
 As from the all-surrounding air  
 The earth takes hues obscure and strange,

When storm and earthquake linger there.

And so, my friend, it then befel  
 To many, most to Lionel,  
 Whose hope was like the life of youth  
 Within him, and when dead, became  
 A spirit of unresting flame,  
 Which goaded him in his distress  
 Over the world's vast wilderness.  
 Three years he left his native land,  
 And on the fourth, when he returned,  
 None knew him : he was stricken deep

With some disease of mind, and turned

Into aught unlike Lionel.

On him—on whom, did he pause in sleep,

Serenest smiles were wont to keep,  
 And, did he wake, a winged band  
 Of bright persuasions, which had fed  
 On his sweet lips and liquid eyes,  
 Kept their swift pinions half outspread

To do on men his least command—

On him, whom once 'twas Paradise  
 Even to behold, now misery lay :

In his own heart 'twas merciless,  
 To all things else none may express  
 Its innocence and tenderness.

'Twas said that he had refuge sought  
 In love from his unquiet thought  
 In distant lands, and been deceived  
 By some strange show ; for there were found,

Blotted with tears, as those relieved  
 By their own words are wont to do,  
 These mournful verses on the ground,  
 By all who read them blotted too.

" How am I changed ! my hopes were  
 once like fire :

I loved, and I believed that life was love.

How am I lost ! on wings of swift desire

Among Heaven's winds my spirit once did move.

I slept, and silver dreams did aye inspire

My liquid sleep. I woke, and did approve

All nature to my heart, and thought to make

A Paradise of earth for one sweet sake

I love, but I believe in love no more :  
 I feel desire, but hope not. O, from  
     sleep  
 Most vainly must my weary brain  
     implore  
 Its long-lost flattery now. I wake to  
     weep,  
 And sit through the long day gnawing  
     the core  
 Of my bitter heart, and, like a miser,  
     keep,  
 Since none in what I feel take pain or  
     pleasure,  
 To my own soul its self-consuming  
     treasure."

He dwelt beside me near the sea ;  
 And oft in evening did we meet,  
 When the waves, beneath the star-  
     light, flee  
 O'er the yellow sands with silver feet,  
 And talked. Our talk was sad and  
     sweet  
 Till slowly from his mien there passed  
 The desolation which it spoke ;  
 And smiles,—as when the lightning's  
     blast  
 Has parched some heaven-delighting  
     oak,  
 The next spring shows leaves pale and  
     rare,  
 But like flowers delicate and fair,  
 On its rent boughs—again arrayed  
 His countenance in tender light :  
 His words grew subtle fire, which  
     made  
 The air his hearers breathed delight :  
 His motions, like the winds, were free,  
 Which bend the bright grass grace-  
     fully,  
 Then fade away in circlets faint :  
 And winged Hope, on which upborne  
 His soul seemed hovering in his eyes,  
 Like some bright spirit newly-born  
 Floating amid the sunny skies,  
 Sprang forth from his rent heart anew.  
 Yet o'er his talk, and looks, and mien,  
 Tempering their loveliness too keen,  
 Past woe its shadow backward threw,  
 Till like an exhalation, spread  
 From flowers half drunk with evening  
     dew,  
 They did become infectious : sweet  
 And subtle mists of sense and thought  
 Which wrapt us soon, when we might  
     meet,

Almost from our own looks, and  
     aught  
 The wide world holds. And so, his  
     mind  
 Was healed, while mine grew sick  
     with fear :  
 For ever now his health declined,  
 Like some frail bark which cannot  
     bear  
 The impulse of an altered wind,  
 Though prosperous ; and my heart  
     grew full  
 'Mid its new joy of a new care :  
 For his cheek became, not pale, but  
     fair,  
 As rose-o'ershadowed lilies are ;  
 And soon his deep and sunny hair,  
 In this alone less beautiful,  
 Like grass in tombs grew wild and  
     rare.  
 The blood in his translucent veins  
 Beat, not like animal life, but love  
 Seemed now its sullen springs to  
     move,  
 When life had failed, and all its  
     pains ;  
 And sudden sleep would seize him oft  
 Like death, so calm, but that a tear,  
 His pointed eyelashes between,  
 Would gather in the light serene  
 Of smiles, whose lustre bright and  
     soft  
 Beneath lay undulating there.  
 His breath was like inconstant flame,  
 As eagerly it went and came ;  
 And I hung o'er him in his sleep,  
 Till, like an image in the lake  
 Which rains disturb, my tears would  
     break  
 The shadow of that slumber deep ;  
 Then he would bid me not to weep,  
 And say, with flattery false, yet sweet,  
 That death and he could never meet,  
 If I would never part with him.  
 And so we loved, and did unite  
 All that in us was yet divided :  
 For when he said, that many a rite,  
 By men to bind but once provided,  
 Could not be shared by him and me,  
 Or they would kill him in their glee,  
 I shuddered, and then laughing said,  
 " We will have rites our faith to bind,  
 But our church shall be the starry  
     night,  
 Our altar the grassy earth outspread,  
 And our priest the muttering wind."

'Twas sunset as I spoke : one star  
Had scarce burst forth, when from  
afar

The ministers of misrule sent,  
Seized upon Lionel, and bore  
His chained limbs to a dreary tower  
In the midst of a city vast and wide  
For he, they said, from his mind had  
bent

Against their gods keen blasphemy,  
For which, though his soul must  
roasted be

In hell's red lakes immortally,  
Yet even on earth must he abide  
The vengeance of their slaves—a trial,  
I think, men call it. What avail  
Are prayers and tears, which chase  
denial

From the fierce savage, nursed in  
hate ?

What the knit soul that pleading and  
pale

Makes wan the quivering cheek,  
which late

It painted with its own delight ?

We were divided. As I could,  
I stilled the tingling of my blood,  
And followed him in their despite,  
As a widow follows, pale and wild,  
The murderers and corse of her only  
child :

And when we came to the prison door,  
And I prayed to share his dungeon  
floor

With prayers which rarely have been  
spurned,

And when men drove me forth and I  
Stared with blank frenzy on the sky,  
A farewell look of love he turned,  
Half-calming me ; then gazed awhile,  
As if through that black and massy  
pile,

And through the crowd around him  
there,

And through the dense and murky air,  
And the thronged streets, he did espy  
What poets knew and prophesy ;  
And said, with voice that made them  
shiver,

And clung like music in my brain,  
And which the mute walls spoke  
again

Prolonging it with deepened strain—

" Fear not the tyrants shall rule for  
ever,

Or the priests of the bloody faith ;

They stand on the brink of that  
mighty river,

Whose waves they have tainted with  
death :

It is fed from the depths of a thous-  
and dells,

Around them it foams, and rages, and  
swells,

And their swords and their sceptres I  
floating see,

Like wrecks, in the surge of eternity."

I dwelt beside the prison gate,

And the strange crowd that out and  
in

Passed, some, no doubt, with mine  
own fate,

Might have fretted me with its cease-  
less din,

But the fever of care was louder  
within.

Soon, but too late, in penitence  
Or fear, his foes released him thence :

I saw his thin and languid form,  
As leaning on the jailer's arm,

Whose hardened eyes grew moist the  
while,

To meet his mute and faded smile,  
And hear his words of kind farewell,

He tottered forth from his damp cell.  
Many had never wept before,

From whom fast tears then gushed  
and fell ;

Many will relent no more,  
Who sobbed like infants then ; ay,  
all

Who thronged the prison's stony hall,  
The rulers or the slaves of law

Felt with a new surprise and awe  
That they were human, till strong  
shame

Made them again become the same.  
The prison bloodhounds, huge and  
grim,

From human looks the infection  
caught,

And fondly crouched and fawned on  
him ;

And men have heard the prisoners  
say,

Who in their rotting dungeons lay,  
That from that hour, throughout one  
day,

The fierce despair and hate, which  
kept

Their trampled bosoms, almost slept :

When, like twin vultures, they hung  
 feeding  
 On each heart's wound, wide torn  
 and bleeding,  
 Because their jailer's rule, they  
 thought,  
 Grew merciful, like a parent's sway.

I know not how, but we were free :  
 And Lionel sate alone with me,  
 As the carriage drove through the  
 streets apace ;  
 And we looked upon each other's face ;  
 And the blood in our fingers inter-  
 twined

Ran like the thoughts of a single mind,  
 As the swift emotions went and came  
 Through the veins of each united  
 frame.

So through the long long streets we  
 past

Of the million-peopled city vast ;  
 Which is that desert, where each one  
 Seeks his mate yet is alone,  
 Beloved and sought and mourned of  
 none ;

Until the clear blue sky was seen,  
 And the grassy meadows bright and  
 green,

And then I sunk in his embrace,  
 Enclosing there a mighty space  
 Of love : and so we travelled on  
 By woods, and fields of yellow flowers,  
 And towns, and villages, and towers,  
 Day after day of happy hours.

It was the azure time of June,  
 When the skies are deep in the stain-  
 less noon,

And the warm and fitful breezes  
 shake

The fresh green leaves of the hedge-  
 row brier ;

And there were odours then to make  
 The very breath we did respire

A liquid element, whereon  
 Our spirits, like delighted things

That walk the air on subtle wings,  
 Floated and mingled far away,

'Mid the warm winds of the sunny day.  
 And when the Evening Star came forth

Above the curve of the new bent  
 moon,

And light and sound ebbd from the  
 earth,

Like the tide of the full and weary sea  
 To the depths of its own tranquillity,

Our natures to its own repose  
 Did the earth's breathless sleep  
 attune :

Like flowers, which on each other  
 close

Their languid leaves when daylight's  
 gone,

We lay, till new emotions came,  
 Which seemed to make each mortal  
 frame

One soul of interwoven flame,  
 A life in life, a second birth,

In worlds diviner far than earth,  
 Which, like two strains of harmony

That mingle in the silent sky,  
 Then slowly disunite, passed by

And left the tenderness of tears,  
 A soft oblivion of all fears,

A sweet sleep : so we travelled on  
 Till we came to the home of Lionel,

Among the mountains wild and lone,  
 Beside the hoary western sea,

Which near the verge of the echoing  
 shore

The massy forest shadowed o'er.

The ancient steward, with hair all  
 hoar,

As we alighted, wept to see,  
 His master changed so fearfully ;

And the old man's sobs did waken me  
 From my dream of unremaining

gladness ;  
 The truth flashed o'er me like quick

madness  
 When I looked, and saw that there

was death  
 On Lionel : yet day by day

He lived, till fear grew hope and faith,  
 And in my soul I dared to say,

" Nothing so bright can pass away :  
 Death is dark, and foul, and dull,

But he is—O how beautiful ! "  
 Yet day by day he grew more weak,

And his sweet voice, when he might  
 speak,

Which ne'er was loud, became more  
 low ;

And the light which flashed through  
 his waxen cheek

Grew faint, as the rose-like hues  
 which flow

From sunset o'er the Alpine snow :  
 And death seemed not like death in

him,  
 For the spirit of . . . e'er every limb

Lingered, a mist of sense and thought.  
 When the summer wind faint odours  
     brought  
 From mountain flowers, even as it  
     passed,  
 His cheek would change, as the noon-  
     day sea  
 Which the dying breeze sweeps fit-  
     fully.  
 If but a cloud the sky o'ercast,  
 You might see his colour come and  
     go,  
 And the softest strain of music made  
 Sweet smiles, yet sad, arise and fade  
 Amid the dew of his tender eyes :  
 And the breath, with intermitting  
     flow,  
 Made his pale lips quiver and part.  
 You might hear the beatings of his  
     heart,  
 Quick, but not strong ; and with my  
     tresses  
 When oft he playfully would bind  
 In the bowers of mossy loneliness  
 His neck, and win me so to mingle  
 In the sweet depth of woven caresses,  
 And our faint limbs were intertwined,  
 Alas ! the unquiet life did tingle  
 From mine own heart through every  
     vein,  
 Like a captive in dreams of liberty,  
 Who beats the walls of his stony cell.  
 But his, it seemed already free,  
 Like the shadow of fire surrounding  
     me !  
 On my faint eyes and limbs did dwell  
 That spirit as it passed, till soon,  
 As a frail cloud wandering o'er the  
     moon,  
 Beneath its light invisible,  
 Is seen when it folds its grey wings  
     again  
 To alight on midnight's dusky plain,  
 I lived and saw, and the gathering  
     soul  
 Passed from beneath that strong  
     control,  
 And I fell on a life which was sick  
     with fear  
 Of all the woe that now I bear.  
 Amid a bloomless myrtle wood,  
 On a green and sea-girt promontory,  
 Not far from where we dwelt, there  
     stood  
 In record of a sweet sad story,  
 An altar and a temple bright

Circled by steps, and o'er the gate  
 Was sculptured, " To Fidelity " ;  
 And in the shrine an image sate,  
 All veiled : but there was seen the  
     light  
 Of smiles, which faintly could express  
 A mingled pain and tenderness,  
 Through that ethereal drapery.  
 The left hand held the head, the  
     right—  
 Beyond the veil, beneath the skin,  
 You might see the nerves quivering  
     within—  
 Was forcing the point of a barbed dart  
 Into its side-convulsing heart.  
 An unskilled hand, yet one informed  
 With genius, had the marble warmed  
 With that pathetic life. This tale  
 It told : A dog had from the sea,  
 When the tide was raging fearfully,  
 Dragged Lionel's mother, weak and  
     pale,  
 Then died beside her on the sand,  
 And she that temple thence had  
     planned ;  
 But it was Lionel's own hand  
 Had wrought the image. Each new  
     moon  
 That lady did, in this lone fane,  
 The rites of a religion sweet,  
 Whose god was in her heart and  
     brain :  
 The seasons' loveliest flowers were  
     strewn  
 On the marble floor beneath her feet,  
 And she brought crowns of sea-buds  
     white,  
 Whose odour is so sweet and faint,  
 And weeds, like branching chrysolite,  
 Woven in devices fine and quaint,  
 And tears from her brown eyes did  
     stain  
 The altar : need but look upon  
 That dying statue, fair and wan,  
 If tears should cease, to weep again :  
 And rare Arabian odours came,  
 Through the myrtle copses, steaming  
     thence  
 From the hissing frankincense,  
 Whose smoke, wool-white as ocean  
     foam,  
 Hung in dense flocks beneath the  
     dome,  
 That ivory dome, whose azure night  
 With golden stars, like heaven, was  
     bright

O'er the split cedars' pointed flame ;  
And the lady's harp would kindle  
there

The melody of an old air,  
Softer than sleep ; the villagers  
Mixed their religion up with hers,  
And as they listened round, shed tears.

One eve he led me to this fane :  
Daylight on its last purple cloud  
Was lingering grey, and soon her  
strain

The nightingale began ; now loud,  
Climbing in circles the windless sky,  
Now dying music ; suddenly  
'Tis scattered in a thousand notes,  
And now to the hushed ear it floats  
Like field-smells known in infancy,  
Then failing, soothes the air again.  
We sat within that temple lone,  
Pavilioned round with Parian stone :  
His mother's harp stood near, and oft  
I had awakened music soft  
Amid its wires : the nightingale  
Was pausing in her heaven-taught  
tale :

" Now drain the cup," said Lionel,  
" Which the poet-bird has crowned  
so well

With the wine of her bright and  
liquid song !

Heardst thou not sweet words among  
That heaven-resounding minstrelsy !  
Heardst thou not, that those who die  
Awake in a world of ecstasy ?  
That love, when limbs are interwoven,  
And sleep when the night of life is  
cloven,

And thought, to the world's dim  
boundaries clinging,

And music, when one beloved is  
singing,

Is death ? Let us drain right joy-  
ously

The cup which the sweet bird fills for  
me."

He paused, and to my lips he bent  
His own : like spirit his words went  
Through all my limbs with the speed  
of fire ;

And his keen eyes, glittering through  
mine,

Filled me with the flame divine,  
Which in their orbs was burning far,  
Like the light of an unmeasured star.

In the sky of midnight dark and deep:  
Yes, 'twas his soul that did inspire  
Sounds, which my skill could ne'er  
awaken ;

And first, I felt my fingers sweep  
The harp, and a long quivering cry  
Burst from my lips in symphony :  
The dusk and solid air was shaken,  
As swift and swifter the notes came  
From my touch, that wandered like  
quick flame,

And from my bosom, labouring  
With some unutterable thing :  
The awful sound of my own voice  
made

My faint lips tremble ; in some mood  
Of wordless thought Lionel stood  
So pale, that even beside his cheek  
The snowy column from its shade  
Caught whiteness : yet his counten-  
ance

Raised upward, burned with radiance  
Of spirit-piercing joy, whose light,  
Like the moon struggling through the  
night

Of whirlwind-rifted clouds, did break  
With beams that might not be con-  
fined.

I paused, but soon his gestures  
kindled

New power, as by the moving wind  
The waves are lifted, and my song  
To low soft notes now changed and  
dwindled

And from the twinkling wires among,  
My languid fingers drew and flung  
Circles of life-dissolving sound,

Yet faint : in æry rings they bound  
My Lionel, who, as every strain  
Grew fainter but more sweet, his mien  
Sunk with the sound relaxedly ;  
And slowly now he turned to me,  
As slowly faded from his face

That awful joy : with looks serene  
He was soon drawn to my embrace,  
And my wild song then died away  
In murmurs : words, I dare not say,  
We mixed, and on his lips mine  
fed

Till they methought felt still and cold:  
" What is it with thee, love ? " I said ;  
No word, no look, no motion ! yes,  
There was 'a change, but spare to  
guess,

Nor let that moment's hope be told.

I looked, and knew that he was dead,  
And fell, as the eagle on the plain  
Falls when life deserts her brain,  
And the mortal lightning is veiled  
again.

O that I were now dead ! but such,  
Did they not, love, demand too much.  
Those dying murmurs ? He forbade.  
O that I once again were mad !  
And yet, dear Rosalind, not so,  
For I would live to share thy woe.  
Sweet boy ! did I forget thee too ?  
Alas, we know not what we do  
When we speak words.

No memory more  
Is in my mind of that seashore.  
Madness came on me, and a troop  
Of misty shapes did seem to sit  
Beside me, on a vessel's poop,  
And the clear north wind was driving  
it.

Then I heard strange tongues, and  
saw strange flowers ;  
And the stars methought grew unlike  
ours,  
And the azure sky and the stormless  
sea

Made me believe that I had died,  
And waked in a world which was to  
me  
Drear hell, though heaven to all be-  
side.

Then a dead sleep fell on my mind,  
Whilst animal life many long years  
Had rescued from a chasm of tears ;  
And when I woke, I wept to find  
That the same lady, bright and wise,  
With silver locks and quick brown  
eyes,

The mother of my Lionel,  
Had tended me in my distress,  
And died some months before. Nor  
less

Wonder, but far more peace and joy,  
Brought in that hour my lovely boy ;  
For through that trance my soul had  
well

The impress of thy being kept ;  
And if I waked, or if I slept,  
No doubt, though memory faithless  
be,

Thy image ever dwelt on me ;  
And thus, O Lionel ! like thee  
Is our sweet child. 'Tis sure most  
strange

I knew not of so great a change,

As that which gave him birth, who  
now  
Is all the solace of my woe.

That Lionel great wealth had left  
By will to me, and that of all  
The ready lies of law bereft,  
My child and me might well befall.  
But let me think not of the scorn,  
Which from the meanest I have borne.  
When, for my child's beloved sake,  
I mixed with slaves, to vindicate  
The very laws themselves do make :  
Let me not say scorn is my fate,  
Lest I be proud, suffering the same  
With those who live in deathless fame.

She ceased.—" Lo, where red morn-  
ing thro' the woods  
Is burning o'er the dew ! " said Rosa-  
lind.

And with these words they rose, and  
towards the flood  
Of the blue lake, beneath the leaves  
now wind

With equal steps and fingers inter-  
twined :

Thence to a lonely dwelling, where  
the shore

Is shadowed with rocks, and cypresses  
Cleave with their dark green cones the  
silent skies,

And with their shadows the clear  
depths below,

And where a little terrace from its  
bowers,

Of blooming myrtle and faint lemon-  
flowers,

Scatters its sense-dissolving fragrance  
o'er

The liquid marble of the windless  
lake ;

And where the aged forest's limbs  
look hoar,

Under the leaves which their green  
garments make,

They come : 'tis Helen's home, and  
clean and white,

Like one which tyrants spare on our  
own land

In some such solitude, its casements  
bright

Shone through their vine leaves in  
the morning sun,

And even within 'twas scarce like  
Italy.

And when she saw how all things  
there were planned,  
As in an English home, dim memory  
Disturbed poor Rosalind: she  
stood as one  
Whose mind is where his body cannot  
be,  
Till Helen led her where her child yet  
slept,  
And said, "Observe, that brow was  
Lionel's,  
Those lips were his, and so he ever  
kept  
One arm in sleep, pillowing his head  
with it.  
You cannot see his eyes, they are two  
wells  
Of liquid love: let us not wake him  
yet."  
But Rosalind could bear no more, and  
wept  
A shower of burning tears, which fell  
upon  
His face, and so his opening lashes  
shone  
With tears unlike his own, as he did  
leap  
In sudden wonder from his innocent  
sleep.

So Rosalind and Helen lived together  
Thenceforth, changed in all else, yet  
friends again,  
Such as they were, when o'er the  
mountain heather  
They wandered in their youth,  
through sun and rain.  
And after many years, for human  
things  
Change even like the ocean and the  
wind,  
Her daughter was restored to Rosa-  
lind,  
And in their circle thence some visit-  
ings  
Of joy 'mid their new calm would  
intervene:  
A lovely child she was, of looks serene,  
And motions which o'er things indif-  
ferent shed  
The grace and gentleness from  
whence they came.  
And Helen's boy grew with her, and  
they fed  
From the same flowers of thought,  
until each mind

S.P.

Like springs which mingle in one  
flood became,  
And in their union soon their parents  
saw  
The shadow of the peace denied to  
them.  
And Rosalind,—for when the living  
stem  
Is cankered in its heart, the tree must  
fall,—  
Died ere her time; and with deep grief  
and awe  
The pale survivors followed her re-  
mains  
Beyond the region of dissolving rains,  
Up the cold mountain she was wont  
to call  
Her tomb; and on Chiavenna's preci-  
pice  
They raised a pyramid of lasting ice,  
Whose polished sides, ere day had yet  
begun,  
Caught the first glow of the unrisen  
sun,  
The last, when it had sunk; and  
through the night  
The charioteers of Arctos wheeled  
round  
Its glittering point, as seen from  
Helen's home,  
Whose sad inhabitants each year  
would come,  
With willing steps climbing that  
rugged height,  
And hang long locks of hair, and gar-  
lands bound  
With amaranth flowers, which, in the  
clime's despite,  
Filled the frore air with unaccus-  
tomed light:  
Such flowers, as in the wintry memory  
bloom  
Of one friend left, adorned that frozen  
tomb.

Helen, whose spirit was of softer  
mould,  
Whose sufferings too were less, death  
slowlier led  
Into the peace of his dominion cold:  
She died among her kindred, being  
old;  
And know, that if love die not in the  
dead  
As in the living, none of mortal kind  
Are blest, as now Helen and Rosalind.

Y



### LINES WRITTEN AMONG THE EUGANEAN HILLS

MANY a green isle needs must be  
In the deep wide sea of misery,  
Or the mariner, worn and wan,  
Never thus could voyage on  
Day and night, and night and day.  
Drifting on his dreary way,  
With the solid darkness black  
Closing round his vessel's track ;  
Whilst above, the sunless sky,  
Big with clouds, hangs heavily,  
And behind the tempest fleet  
Hurries on with lightning feet,  
Riving sail, and cord, and plank,  
Till the ship has almost drank  
Death from the o'er-brimming deep ;  
And sinks down, down, like that sleep  
When the dreamer seems to be  
Weltering through eternity ;  
And the dim low line before  
Of a dark and distant shore  
Still recedes, as ever still  
Longing with divided will ;  
But no power to seek or shun,  
He is ever drifted on  
O'er the unreposing wave  
To the haven of the grave.  
What, if there no friends will greet ;  
What, if there no heart will meet  
His with love's impatient beat ;  
Wander wheresoe'er he may,  
Can he dream before that day  
To find refuge from distress  
In friendship's smile, in love's caress ?  
Then 'twill wreak him little woe  
Whether such there be or no :  
Senseless is the breast, and cold,  
Which relenting love would fold ,  
Bloodless are the veins and chill  
Which the pulse of pain did fill :  
Every little living nerve  
That from bitter words did swerve  
Round the tortured lips and brow,  
Are like sapless leaflets now  
Frozen upon December's bough.

On the beach of a northern sea  
Which tempests shake eternally,  
As once the wretch there lay to sleep,  
Lies a solitary heap,  
One white skull and seven dry bones,  
On the margin of the stones,  
Where a few grey rushes stand,  
Boundaries of the sea and land :  
Nor is heard one voice of wail

But the sea-mews, as they sail  
O'er the billows of the gale ;  
Or the whirlwind up and down  
Howling like a slaughtered town,  
When a king in glory rides  
Through the pomp of fratricides :  
Those unburied bones around  
There is many a mournful sound ;  
There is no lament for him,  
Like a sunless vapour, dim,  
Who once clothed with life and  
thought  
What now moves nor murmurs not.

Ay, many flowering islands lie  
In the waters of wide Agony :  
To such a one this morn was led  
My bark, by soft winds piloted.  
'Mid the mountains Euganean,  
I stood listening to the pæan  
With which the legioned rooks did  
hail

The sun's uprise majestic ;  
Gathering round with wings all hoar,  
Through the dewy mist they soar  
Like grey shades, till the eastern  
heaven

Bursts, and then, as clouds of even,  
Flecked with fire and azure, lie  
In the unfathomable sky,  
So their p'umes of purple grain,  
Starred with drops of golden rain,  
Gleam above the sunlight wools,  
As in silent multitudes  
On the morning's fitful gale  
Through the broken mist they sail ;  
And the vapours cloven and gleaming  
Follow down the dark steep stream-  
ing,

Till all is bright, and clear and still,  
Round the solitary hill.  
Beneath is spread like a green sea  
The waveless plain of Lombardy,  
Bounded by the vaporous air,  
Islanded by cities fair ;  
Underneath day's azure eyes,  
Ocean's nursling, Venice lies,—  
A peopled labyrinth of walls,  
Amphitrite's destined halls,  
Which her hoary sire now paves  
With his blue and beaming waves.  
Lo ! the sun upsprings behind,  
Broad, red, radiant, half-reclined  
On the level quivering line  
Of the waters crystalline ;  
And before that chasm of light,

As within a furnace bright,  
Column, tower, and dome, and spire,  
Shine like obelisks of fire,  
Pointing with inconstant motion  
From the altar of dark ocean  
To the sapphire-tinted skies ;  
As the flames of sacrifice  
From the marbled shrines did rise,  
As to pierce the dome of gold  
Where Apollo spoke of old.

Sun-girt City ! thou hast been  
Ocean's child, and then his queen  
Now is come a darker day,  
And thou soon must be his prey,  
If the power that raised thee here  
Hallow so thy watery bier.  
A less drear ruin than now,  
With thy conquest-branded brow  
Stooping to the slave of slaves  
From thy throne among the waves,  
Wilt thou be, when the sea-mew  
Flies, as once before it flew,  
O'er thine isles depopulate,  
And all is in its ancient state,  
Save where many a palace-gate  
With green sea-flowers overgrown  
Like a rock of ocean's own,  
Topples o'er the abandon'd sea  
As the tides change sullenly.  
The fisher on his watery way,  
Wandering at the close of day,  
Will spread his sail and seize his oar,  
Till he pass the gloomy shore,  
Lest thy dead should, from their sleep  
Burstin' o'er the starlight deep,  
Lead a rapid masque of death  
O'er the waters of his path.

Those who alone thy towers behold  
Quivering through aerial gold,  
As I now behold them here,  
Would imagine not they were  
Sepulchres, where human forms,  
Like pollution-nourish'd worms,  
To the corpse of greatness cling,  
Murdered and now mouldering :  
But if Freedom should awake  
In her omnipotence, and shake  
From the Celtic Anarch's hold  
All the keys of dungeons cold,  
Where a hundred cities lie  
Chained like thee, ingloriously,  
Thou and all thy sister band  
Might adorn this sunny land,  
Twining memories of old time

With new virtues more sublime ;  
If not, perish thou and they ;  
Clouds which stain truth's rising day  
By her sun consumed away,  
Earth can spare ye ; while like flower ,  
In the waste of years and hours,  
From your dust new nations spring  
With more kindly blossoming.

Perish ! let there only be  
Floating o'er thy hearthless sea,  
As the garment of thy sky  
Clothes the world immortally,  
One remembrance, more sublime  
Than the tattered pall of Time,  
Which scarce hides thy visage wan :  
That a tempest-cleaving swan  
Of the songs of Albion,  
Driven from his ancestral streams,  
By the might of evil dreams,  
Found a nest in thee : and Ocean  
Welcomed him wi' h such emotion  
That its joy grew his, and sprung  
From his lips like music flung  
O'er a mighty thunder-fit,  
Chastening terror : what though yet  
Poesy's unfailing river,  
Which through Albion win is for ever,  
Lashing with melodious wave  
Many a sacred poet's grave,  
Mourn its latest nursling fled !  
What though thou with all thy dead  
Scarce can for this fame repay  
Aught thine own,—oh, rather say,  
Though thy sins and slaveries foul  
Overcloud a sunlike soul !  
As the ghost of Homer clings  
Round Scamander's wasting springs ;  
As divinest Shakespeare's might  
Fills Avon and the world with light,  
Like omniscient power, which he  
Imaged 'mid mortality ;  
As the love from Petrarch's urn,  
Yet amid yon hills doth burn, [heart  
A quenchless lamp, by which the  
Sees things unearthly ; so thou art,  
Mighty spirit : so shall be  
The city that did refuge thee.

Lo, the sun floats up the sky,  
Like thought-winged Liberty,  
Till the universal light  
Seems to level plain and height ;  
From the sea a mist has spread,  
And the beams of morn lie dead  
On the towers of Venice now,

Like its glory of long ago.  
 By the skirts of that grey cloud  
 Many-domed Padua proud  
 Stands, a peopled solitude,  
 'Mid the harvest-shining plain,  
 Where the peasant heaps his grain  
 In the garner of his foe,  
 And the milk-white oxen slow  
 With the purple vintage strain,  
 Heaped upon the creaking wain,  
 That the brutal Celt may swill  
 Drunken sleep with savage will ;  
 And the sickle to the sword  
 Lies unchanged, though many a lord  
 Like a weed whose shade is poison,  
 Overgrows this region's foison,  
 Sheaves of whom are ripe to come  
 To destruction's harvest-home :  
 Men must reap the things they sow,  
 Force from force must ever flow,  
 Or worse ; but 'tis a bitter woe  
 That love or reason cannot change  
 The despot's rage, the slave's revenge.  
 Padua, thou within whose walls  
 Those mute guests at festivals,  
 Son and Mother, Death and Sin,  
 Played at dice for Ezzelin,  
 Till Death cried, " I win, I win ! "  
 And Sin cursed to lose the wager,  
 But Death promised, to assuage her  
 That he would petition for  
 Her to be made Vice-Emperor,  
 When the destined years were o'er,  
 Over all between the Po  
 And the eastern Alpine snow,  
 Under the mighty Austrian.  
 Sin smiled so as Sin only can,  
 And since that time, ay, long before,  
 Both have ruled from shore to shore.  
 That incestuous pair, who follow  
 Tyrants as the sun the swallow,  
 As Repentance follows Crime,  
 And as changes follow Time.  
 In thine halls the lamp of learning,  
 Padua, now no more is burning ;  
 Like a meteor, whose wild way  
 Is lost over the grave of day,  
 It gleams betrayed and to betray :  
 Once remotest nations came  
 To adore that sacred flame,  
 When it lit not many a hearth  
 On this cold and gloomy earth ;  
 Now new fires from Antique light  
 Spring beneath the wide world's  
 might :  
 But their spark lies dead in thee,

Trampled out by tyranny.  
 As the Norway woodman quells,  
 In the depth of piny dells,  
 One light flame among the brakes,  
 While the boundless forest shakes,  
 And its mighty trunks are torn  
 By the fire thus lowly born ;  
 The spark beneath his feet is dead,  
 He starts to see the flames it fed  
 Howling through the darkened sky  
 With myriad tongues victoriously,  
 And sinks down in fear : so thou,  
 O tyranny ! beholdest now  
 Light around thee, and thou hearest  
 The loud flames ascend, and fearest :  
 Grovel on the earth ; ay, hide  
 In the dust thy purple pride !  
 Noon descends around me now :  
 'Tis the noon of autumn's glow  
 When a soft and purple mist  
 Like a vaporous amethyst,  
 Of an air-dissolved star  
 Mingling light and fragrance, far  
 From the curved horizon's bound  
 To the point of heaven's profound,  
 Fills the overflowing sky ;  
 And the plains that silent lie  
 Underneath ; the leaves unsodden  
 Where the infant frost has trodden  
 With his morning-winged feet,  
 Whose bright print is gleaming yet ;  
 And the red and golden vines,  
 Piercing with their trellised lines  
 The rough, dark-skirted wilderness ;  
 The dun and bladed grass no less,  
 Pointing from this hoary tower  
 In the windless air ; the flower  
 Glimmering at my feet ; the line  
 Of the olive-sandalled Apennine  
 In the south dimly islanded ;  
 And the Alps, whose snows are spread  
 High between the clouds and sun ;  
 And of living things each one ;  
 And my spirit, which so long  
 Darkened this swift stream of song,  
 Interpenetrated lie  
 By the glory of the sky ;  
 Be it love, light, harmony,  
 Odour, or the soul of all  
 Which from heaven like dew doth fall,  
 Or the mind which feeds this verse  
 Peopling the lone universe.  
 Noon descends, and after noon  
 Autumn's evening meets me soon,  
 Leading the infantine moon,  
 And that one star, which to her

Almost seems to minister  
 Half the crimson light she brings  
 From the sunset's radiant springs ;  
 And the soft dreams of the morn  
 (Which like winged winds had borne  
 To that silent isle, which lies  
 'Mid remembered agonies,  
 The frail bark of this lone being),  
 Pass, to other sufferers fleeing,  
 And its ancient pilot, Pain,  
 Sits beside the helm again.  
 Other flowering isles must be  
 In the sea of life and agony :  
 Other spirits float and flee  
 O'er that gulf : even now, perhaps,  
 On some rock the wild wave wraps,  
 With folding wings they waiting sit  
 For my bark, to pilot it  
 To some calm and blooming cove,  
 Where for me, and those I love,  
 May a windless bower be built,  
 Far from passion, pain, and guilt,  
 In a dell 'mid lawny hills,  
 Which the wild sea-murmur fills,  
 And soft sunshine, and the sound

Of old forests echoing round,  
 And the light and smell divine  
 Of all flowers that breathe and shine.  
 We may live so happy there,  
 That the spirits of the air,  
 Envyng us, may even entice  
 To our healing paradise  
 The polluting multitude ;  
 But their rage would be subdued  
 By that clime divine and calm,  
 And the winds whose wings rain balm  
 On the uplifted soul, and leaves  
 Under which the bright sea heaves ;  
 While each breathless interval  
 In their whisperings musical  
 The inspired soul supplies  
 With its own deep melodies ;  
 And the love which heals all strife  
 Circling, like the breath of life,  
 All things in that sweet abode  
 With its own mild brotherhood.  
 They, not it, would change ; and soon  
 Every sprite beneath the moon  
 Would repent its envy vain,  
 And the earth grow young again.

## JULIAN AND MADDALO

### A CONVERSATION

COUNT MADDALO is a Venetian nobleman of ancient family and of great fortune, who, without mixing much in the society of his countrymen, resides chiefly at his magnificent palace in that city. He is a person of the most consummate genius ; and capable, if he would direct his energies to such an end, of becoming the redeemer of his degraded country. But it is his weakness to be proud : he derives, from a comparison of his own extraordinary mind with the dwarfish intellects that surround him, an intense apprehension of the nothingness of human life. His passions and his powers are incomparably greater than those of other men, and, instead of the latter having been employed in curbing the former, they have mutually lent each other strength. His ambition preys upon itself, for want of objects which it can consider worthy of exertion. I say that Maddalo is proud, because I can find no other word to express the con-

centered and impatient feelings which consume him ; but it is on his own hopes and affections only that he seems to trample, for in social life no human being can be more gentle, patient, and unassuming than Maddalo. He is cheerful, frank, and witty. His more serious conversation is a sort of intoxication ; men are held by it as by a spell. He has travelled much ; and there is an inexpressible charm in his relation of his adventures in different countries.

Julian is an Englishman of good family, passionately attached to those philosophical notions which assert the power of man over his own mind, and the immense improvements of which, by the extinction of certain moral superstitions, human society may yet be susceptible. Without concealing the evil in the world, he is for ever speculating how good may be made superior. He is a complete infidel, and a scoffer at all things reputed holy ; and Maddalo takes a wicked

pleasure in drawing out his taunts against religion. What Maddalo thinks on these matters is not exactly known. Julian, in spite of his heterodox opinions, is conjectured by his friends to possess some good qualities. How far this is possible the pious reader will determine. Julian is rather serious.

Of the Maniac I can give no information. He seems by his own account to have been disappointed in love. He was evidently a very cultivated and amiable person when in his right senses. His story, told at length, might be, like many other stories of the same kind : the unconnected exclamations of his agony will perhaps be found a sufficient comment for the text of every heart.

The meadows with fresh streams, the bees  
with thyme,  
The goats with the green leaves of budding spring,  
Are satyrated not—nor Love with tears.  
VIRGIL'S GALLUS.

I RODE one evening with Count Maddalo

Upon the bank of land which breaks  
the flow

Of Adria towards Venice : a bare  
strand

Of hillocks, heaped from ever-shifting  
sand,

Matted with thistles and amphibious  
weeds,

Such as from earth's embrace the salt  
ooze breeds,

Is this, an uninhabited seaside,  
Which the lone fisher, when his nets  
are dried,

Abandons : and no other object breaks  
The waste, but one dwarf tree and  
some few stakes

Broken and unrepaired, and the tide  
makes

A narrow space of level sand thereon,  
Where 'twas our wont to ride while  
day went down. [taste

This ride was my delight. I love all  
And solitary places ; where we taste  
The pleasure of believing what we see  
Is boundless, as we wish our souls to  
be :

And such was this wide ocean, and  
this shore

More barren than its billows : and yet  
more [I love

Than all, with a remembered friend  
To ride as then I rode ;—for the winds  
drove

The living spray along the sunny air  
Into our faces ; the blue heavens were  
bare,

Stripped to their depths by the  
awakening north ;

And, from the waves, sound like de-  
light broke forth

Harmonizing with solitude, and sent  
Into our hearts aerial merriment.

So, as we rode, we talked ; and the  
swift thought, [not,

Winging itself with laughter, lingered  
But flew from brain to brain ; such

glee was ours,  
Charged with light memories of re-  
membered hours,

None slow enough for sadness, till we  
came

Homeward, which always makes the  
spirit tame.

This day had been cheerful but cold,  
and now

The sun was sinking, and the wind  
also.

Our talk grew somewhat serious, as  
may be

Talk interrupted with such raillery  
As mocks itself, because it cannot

scorn  
The thoughts it would extinguish :—

'twas forlorn, [tell,

Yet pleasing ; such as once, so poets  
The devils held within the dales of

hell,  
Concerning God, freewill, and destiny.

Of all that Earth has been, or yet may  
be ;

All that vain men imagine or believe,  
Or hope can paint, or suffering can

achieve,  
We descanted ; and I (for ever still

Is it not wise to make the best of ill ?  
Argued against despondency ; but

pride [side,  
Made my companion take the darker

The sense that he was greater than his  
kind

Had struck, methinks, his eagle spirit  
blind

By gazing on its own exceeding light,

<p>             Meanwhile the sun paused ere it              should alight              Over the horizon of the mountains—              Oh !              How beautiful is sunset, when the              glow              Of heaven descends upon a land like              thee,              Thou paradise of exiles, Italy !              Thy mountains, seas, and vineyards,              and the towers,              Of cities they encircle !—It was ours              To stand on thee, beholding it : and              then,              Just where we had dismounted, the              Count's men              Were waiting for us with the gondola.              As those who pause on some delightful              way,              Though bent on pleasant pilgrimage,              we stood              Looking upon the evening, and the              flood              Which lay between the city and the              shore,              Paved with the image of the sky : the              hoar              And airy Alps, towards the north,              appeared,              Thro' mist a heaven-sustaining bul-              wark, reared              Between the east and west ; and half              the sky              Was roofed with clouds of rich em-              blazonry,              Dark purple at the zenith, which still              grew              Down the steep west into a wondrous              hue              Brighter than burning gold, even to              the rent              Where the swift sun yet paused in his              descent              Among the many-folded hills—they              were              Those famous Euganean hills, which              bear,              As seen from Lido through the har-              bour piles,              The likeness of a clump of peaked              isles—              And then, as if the earth and sea had              been              Dissolved into one lake of fire, were              seen           </p>	<p>             Those mountains towering, as from              waves of flame,              Around the vaporous sun, from which              there came              The inmost purple spirit of light, and              made              Their very peaks transparent. “ Ere              it fade,”              Said my companion, “ I will show you              soon              A better station.” So, o'er the lagune              We glided ; and from that funereal              bark              I leaned, and saw the city, and could              mark              How from their many isles, in even-              ing's gleam,              Its temples and its palaces did seem              Like fabrics of enchantment piled to              heaven.              I was about to speak, when—“ We are              even              Now at the point I meant,” said Mad-              dalo,              And bade the gondolieri cease to row.              “ Look, Julian, on the west, and listen              well              If you hear not a deep and heavy              bell.” [sun              I looked, and saw between us and the              A building on an island, such a one              As age to age might add, for uses              vile,—              A windowless, deformed, and dreary              pile ;              And on the top an open tower, where              hung              A bell, which in the radiance swayed              and swung.              We could just hear its coarse and iron              tongue :              The broad sun sank behind it, and it              tolled              In strong and black relief—“ What              we behold              Shall be the madhouse and its belfry              tower,”—              Said Maddalo ; “ and even at this              hour,              Those who may cross the water hear              that bell,              Which calls the maniacs, each one              from his cell,              To vespers.”—“ As much skill as need              to pray,           </p>
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In thanks or hope for their dark lot  
 have they,  
 To their stern maker," I replied.—"O,  
 ho !  
 You talk as in years past," said Mad-  
 dalo.  
 "'Tis strange men change not. You  
 were ever still  
 Among Christ's flock a perilous infidel,  
 A wolf for the meek lambs : if you  
 can't swim,  
 Beware of providence." I looked on  
 him,  
 But the gay smile had faded from his  
 eye.  
 "And such," he cried, "is our mor-  
 tality ;  
 And this must be the emblem and the  
 sign  
 Of what should be eternal and divine ;  
 And like that black and dreary bell,  
 the soul,  
 Hung in a heaven-illuminated tower,  
 must toll  
 Our thoughts and our desires to meet  
 below  
 Round the rent heart, and pray—as  
 madmen do ;  
 For what ? they know not, till the  
 night of death,  
 As sure set that strange vision, severeth  
 Our memory from itself, and us from  
 all  
 We sought, and yet were baffled." I  
 recall [mar  
 The sense of what he said, although I  
 The force of his expressions. The  
 broad star  
 Of day meanwhile had sunk behind  
 the hill ;  
 And the black bell became invisible ;  
 And the red tower looked grey ; and  
 all between,  
 The churches, ships, and palaces,  
 were seen  
 Huddled in gloom ; into the purple  
 sea  
 The orange hues of heaven sunk si-  
 lently.  
 We hardly spoke, and soon the gon-  
 dola  
 Conveyed me to my lodging by the  
 way.  
 The following morn was rainy, cold,  
 and dim :

Ere Maddalo arose I called on him,  
 And whilst I waited with his child I  
 played ;  
 A lovelier toy sweet Nature never  
 made ;  
 A serious, subtle, wild, yet gentle be-  
 ing ;  
 Graceful without design, and unfore-  
 seeing ;  
 With eyes—Oh ! speak not of her  
 eyes ! which seem  
 Twin mirrors of Italian Heaven, yet  
 gleam  
 With such deep meaning as we never  
 see  
 But in the human countenance.  
 With me  
 She was a special favourite : I had  
 nursed  
 Her fine and feeble limbs, when she  
 came first  
 To this bleak world ; and yet she  
 seemed to know  
 On second sight her ancient play-  
 fellow,  
 Less changed than she was by six  
 months or so.  
 For, after her first shyness was worn  
 out, [about,  
 We sat there, rolling billiard balls  
 When the Count entered. Salutations  
 passed :  
 "The words you spoke last night  
 might well have cast  
 A darkness on my spirit :—if man be  
 The passive thing you say, I should  
 not see  
 Much harm in the religions and old  
 saws,  
 (Tho' I may never own such leaden  
 laws)  
 Which break a teachless nature to the  
 yoke :  
 Mine is another faith."—Thus much  
 I spoke,  
 And, noting he replied not, added—  
 "See  
 This lovely child ; blithe, innocent,  
 and free ;  
 She spends a happy time, with little  
 care ;  
 While we to such sick thoughts sub-  
 jected are,  
 As came on you last night. It is our  
 will

Which thus enchains us to permitted  
ill.

We might be otherwise ; we might be  
all

We dream of, happy, high, majestic.  
Where is the beauty, love, and truth,  
we seek,

But in our minds ? And, if we were  
not weak,

Should we be less in deed than in de-  
sire ? ”—

—“ Ay, if we were not weak,—and we  
aspire,

How vainly ! to be strong,” said Mad-  
dalo :

“ You talk Utopian ”—

“ It remains to know,”

I then rejoined, “ and those who try,  
may find

How strong the chains are which our  
spirit bind :

Brittle perchance as straw. We are  
assured

Much may be conquered, much may  
be endured,

Of what degrades and crushes us.  
We know

That we have power over ourselves to  
do

And suffer—*what*, we know not till  
we try ;

But something nobler than to live  
and die :

So taught the kings of old philosophy,  
Who reigned before religion made

men blind ;  
And those who suffer with their suf-  
fering kind,

Yet feel this faith, religion.”

“ My dear friend.”

Said Maddalo, “ my judgment will  
not bend

To your opinion, though I think you  
might

Make such a system refutation-tight,  
As far as words go. I knew one like

you,  
Who to this city came some months  
ago,

With whom I argued in this sort,—  
and he

Is now gone mad—and so he an-  
swered me,

Poor fellow !—But if you would like  
to go,

We'll visit him, and his wild talk will  
show

How vain are such aspiring  
theories.”—

“ I hope to prove the induction other-  
wise,

And that a want of that true theory  
still,

Which seeks a soul of goodness in  
things ill,

Or in himself or others, has thus  
bowed

His being :—there are some by nature  
proud,

Who, patient in all else, demand but  
this—

To love and be beloved with gentle-  
ness :—

And being scorned, what wonder if  
they die

Some living death ? This is not  
destiny,

But man's own wilful ill.”

As thus I spoke,

Servants announced the gondola, and  
we

Through the fast-falling rain and  
high-wrought sea

Sailed to the island where the mad-  
house stands.

We disembarked. The clap of tor-  
tured hands,

Fierce yells and howlings, and lam-  
entings keen,

And laughter where complaint had  
merrier been,

Accosted us. We climbed the oozy  
stairs

Into an old courtyard. I heard on  
high,

Then, fragments of most touching  
melody,

But looking up saw not the singer  
there.—

Thro' the black bars in the tempestu-  
ous air

I saw, like weeds on a wrecked palace  
growing,

Long tangled locks flung wildly forth  
and flowing,

Of those on a sudden who were be-  
guiled,

Into strange silence, and looked forth  
and smiled,



Hearing sweet sounds. Then I :

"Methinks there were  
A cure of these with patience and kind  
care,

If music can thus move. But what  
is he,

Whom we seek here ? "

"Of his sad history  
I know but this," said Maddalo : "he  
came

To Venice a dejected man, and fame  
Said he was wealthy, or he had been  
so.

Some thought the loss of fortune  
wrought him woe ;

But he was ever talking in such sort  
As you do,—but more sadly ;—he  
seemed hurt,

Even as a man with his peculiar  
wrong,

To hear but of the oppression of the  
strong,

Or those absurd deceits (I think with  
you

In some respects, you know) which  
carry through

The excellent impostors of this earth  
When they outface detection. He  
had worth,

Poor fellow ! but a humorist in his  
way."

—"Alas, what drove him mad ? "

"I cannot say.  
A lady came with him from France,  
and when

She left him and returned, he wander-  
ed then

About yon lonely isles of desert sand,  
Till he grew wild. He had no cash  
nor land

Remaining—the police had brought  
him here—

Some fancy took him, and he would  
not bear

Removal, so I fitted up for him  
Those rooms beside the sea, to please  
his whim ;

And sent him busts, and books, and  
urns for flowers,

Which had adorned his life in happier  
hours,

And instruments of music. You may  
guess

A stranger could do little more or less  
For one so gentle and unfortunate—

And those are his sweet strains which  
charm the weight

From madmen's chains, and make  
this hell appear

A heaven of sacred silence, hushed to  
hear."

"Nay, this was kind of you,—he had  
no claim,

As the world says."

"None but the very same  
Which I on all mankind, were I, as he,

Fallen to such deep reverse. His  
melody

Is interrupted now : we hear the din  
Of madmen, shriek on shriek, again  
begin :

Let us now visit him : after this  
strain,

He ever communes with himself  
again,

And sees and hears not any." Having said

These words, we called the keeper,  
and he led

To an apartment opening on the sea—  
There the poor wretch was sitting  
mournfully

Near a piano, his pale fingers twined  
One with the other ; and the ooze  
and wind

Rushed through an open casement,  
and did sway

His hair, and starred it with the  
brackish spray.

His head was leaning on a music-book,  
And he was muttering ; and his  
lean limbs shook.

His lips were pressed against a folded  
leaf,

In hue too beautiful for health, and  
grief

Smiled in their motions as they lay  
apart,

As one who wrought from his own fer-  
vid heart

The eloquence of passion : soon he  
raised

His sad meek face, and eyes lustrous  
and glazed,

And spoke,—sometimes as one who  
wrote, and thought

His words might move some heart  
that heeded not,

If sent to distant lands ;—and then as  
one

Reproaching deeds never to be un-  
done,  
With wondering self-compassion ;—  
then his speech  
Was lost in grief, and then his words  
came each  
Unmodulated and expressionless,—  
But that from one jarred accent you  
might guess  
It was despair made them so uni-  
form :  
And all the while the loud and gusty  
storm  
Hissed through the window, and we  
stood behind,  
Stealing his accents from the envious  
wind,  
Unseen. I yet remember what he  
said  
Distinctly, such impression his words  
made.

" Month after month," he cried, " to  
bear this load,  
And, as a jade urged by the whip and  
goad,  
To drag life on—which like a heavy  
chain  
Lengthens behind with many a link  
of pain,  
And not to speak my grief—O, not  
to dare  
To give a human voice to my despair ;  
But live, and move, and, wretched  
thing ! smile on,  
As if I never went aside to groan,  
And wear this mask of falsehood even  
to those  
Who are most dear—not for my own  
repose.  
Alas ! no scorn, nor pain, nor hate,  
could be  
So heavy as that falsehood is to me—  
But that I cannot bear more altered  
faces  
Than needs must be, more changed  
and cold embraces,  
More misery, disappointment, and  
mistrust,  
To own me for their father. Would  
the dust  
Were covered in upon my body now !  
That the life ceased to toil within my  
brow !  
And then these thoughts would at the  
last be fled :

Let us not fear such pain can vex the  
dead.

" What Power delights to torture us ?  
I know  
That to myself I do not wholly owe  
What now I suffer, though in part I  
may.  
Alas ! none strewed fresh flowers upon  
the way  
Where, wandering heedlessly, I met  
pale Pain,  
My shadow, which will leave me not  
again.  
If I have erred, there was no joy in  
error,  
But pain, and insult, and unrest, and  
terror.  
I have not, as some do, bought peni-  
tence  
With pleasure, and a dark yet sweet  
offence ;  
For then if love, and tenderness, and  
truth,  
Had overlived Hope's momentary  
youth,  
My creed should have redeemed me  
from repenting.  
But loathed scorn and outrage un-  
relenting  
Met love excited by far other seeming  
Until the end was gained :—as one  
from dreaming  
Of sweetest peace, I woke, and found  
my state  
Such as it is.—

" O thou, my spirit's mate  
Who, for thou art compassionate and  
wise,  
Wouldst pity me from thy most gentle  
eyes  
If this sad writing thou shouldst ever  
see ;  
My secret groans must be unheard by  
thee ;  
Thou wouldst weep tears, bitter as  
blood, to know  
Thy lost friend's incommunicab'  
woe.  
Ye few by whom my nature has been  
weighed  
In friendship, let me not that name  
degrade,  
By placing on your hearts the secret  
load

Which crushes mine to dust. There  
 is one road  
 To peace, and that is truth, which fol-  
 low ye !  
 Love sometimes leads astray to  
 misery.  
 Yet think not, though subdued (and I  
 may well  
 Say that I am subdued)—that the full  
 hell  
 Within me would infect the untainted  
 breast  
 Of sacred nature with its own unrest ;  
 As some perverted beings think to  
 find  
 In scorn or hate a medicine for the  
 mind  
 Which scorn or hate hath wounded.  
 —O, how vain !  
 The dagger heals not, but may rend  
 again.  
 Believe that I am ever still the same  
 In creed as in resolve ; and what may  
 tame  
 My heart, must leave the understand-  
 ing free,  
 Or all would sink under this agony.—  
 Nor dream that I will join the vulgar  
 lie,  
 Or with my silence sanction tyranny,  
 Or seek a moment's shelter from my  
 pain  
 In any madness which the world calls  
 gain ;  
 Ambition, or revenge, or thoughts as  
 stern  
 As those which make me what I am,  
 or turn  
 To avarice, or misanthropy, or lust  
 Heap on me soon, O grave, thy wel-  
 come dust !  
 Till then the dungeon may demand  
 its prey ;  
 And Poverty and Shame may meet  
 and say,  
 Halting beside me in the public way,—  
 ' That love-devoted youth is ours :  
 let's sit  
 Beside him : he may live some six  
 months yet.'—  
 Or the red scaffold, as our country  
 bends,  
 May ask some willing victim ; or ye,  
 friends,  
 May fall under some sorrow, which  
 this heart

Or hand may share, or vanquish, or  
 avert ;  
 I am prepared, in truth, with no proud  
 joy,  
 To do or suffer aught, 'as when a boy  
 I did devote to justice and to love,  
 My nature, worthless now.  
 " I must remove  
 A veil from my pent mind. 'Tis torn  
 aside !  
 O ! pallid as death's dedicated bride,  
 Thou mockery which art sitting by  
 my side,  
 Am I not wan like thee ? At the  
 grave's call  
 I haste, invited to thy wedding-ball,  
 To meet the ghastly paramour, for  
 whom  
 Thou hast deserted me,—and made  
 the tomb  
 Thy bridal bed. But I beside thy  
 feet  
 Will lie, and watch ye from my wind-  
 ing-sheet  
 Thus—wide awake though dead—  
 Yet stay, O, stay  
 Go not so soon—I know not what I  
 say—  
 Hear but my reasons—I am mad, I  
 fear,  
 My fancy is o'erwrought—thou art  
 not here,  
 Pale art thou 'tis most true—but  
 thou art gone—  
 Thy work is finished ; I am left alone.

\* \* \*

" Nay was it I who woo'd thee to this  
 breast,  
 Which like a serpent thou envenomest  
 As in repayment of the warmth it  
 lent ?  
 Didst thou not seek me for thine own  
 content ?  
 Did not thy love awaken mine ? I  
 thought  
 That thou wert she who said ' You  
 kiss me not  
 Ever ; I fear you do not love me now,'  
 In truth I loved even to my over-  
 throw  
 Her who would fain forget these  
 words, but they  
 Cling to her mind, and cannot pass  
 away.

\* \* \*

" You say that I am proud ; that  
 when I speak,  
 My lip is tortured with the wrongs  
 which break  
 The spirit it expresses.—Never one  
 Humbled himself before, as I have  
 done ;  
 Even the instinctive worm on which  
 we tread,  
 Turns, though it wound not—then,  
 with prostrate head,  
 Sinks in the dust, and writhes like me  
 —and dies :  
 —No — wears a living death of  
 agonies ;  
 As the slow shadows of the pointed  
 grass  
 Mark the eternal periods, its pangs  
 pass,  
 Slow, ever-moving, making moments  
 be  
 As mine seem,—each an immortality !

\* \* \*

" That you had never seen me ! never  
 heard  
 My voice ! and more than all had  
 ne'er endured  
 The deep pollution of my loathed em-  
 brace ;  
 That your eyes ne'er had lied love in  
 my face !  
 That, like some maniac monk, I had  
 torn out  
 The nerves of manhood by their bleed-  
 ing root  
 With mine own quivering fingers ! so  
 that ne'er  
 Our hearts had for a moment mingled  
 there,  
 To disunite in horror ! These were  
 not  
 With thee like some suppressed and  
 hideous thought,  
 Which flits athwart our musings, but  
 can find  
 No rest within a pure and gentle  
 mind—  
 Thou sealedst them with many a bare  
 broad word,  
 And sear'dst my memory o'er them,  
 —for I heard  
 And can forget not—they were minis-  
 tered,  
 One after one, those curses. Mix  
 them up

Like self-destroying poisons in one  
 cup ;  
 And they will make one blessing,  
 which thou ne'er  
 Didst imprecate for on me—death !  
 " It were  
 A cruel punishment for one most cruel,  
 If such can love, to make that love the  
 fuel  
 Of the mind's hell—hate, scorn, re-  
 morse, despair :  
 But *me*, whose heart a stranger's tear  
 might wear  
 As water-drops the sandy fountain  
 stone ;  
 Who loved and pitied all things, and  
 could moan  
 For woes which others hear not, and  
 could see  
 The absent with a glass of phantasy,  
 And near the poor and trampled sit  
 and weep,  
 Following the captive to his dungeon  
 deep ;  
*Me*, who am as a nerve o'er, which do  
 creep  
 The else-unfelt oppressions of this  
 earth,  
 And was to thee the flame upon thy  
 hearth,  
 When all beside was cold :—that thou  
 on me  
 Should rain these plagues of blister-  
 ing agony—  
 Such curses are from lips once elo-  
 quent  
 With love's too partial praise ! Let  
 none relent  
 Who intend deeds too dreadful for a  
 name  
 Henceforth, if an example for the same  
 They seek :—for thou on me lookedst  
 so and so,  
 And didst speak thus and thus. I  
 live to show  
 How much men bear, and die not.

\* \* \*

" Thou wilt tell,  
 With the grimace of hate, how horrible  
 It was to meet my love when thine  
 grew less ;  
 Thou wilt admire how I could e'er  
 address  
 Such features to love's work . . .  
 This taunt, though true,

(For indeed Nature nor in form nor  
hue  
Bestowed on me her choicest work-  
manship)  
Shall not be thy defence : for since  
thy lip  
Met mine first, years long past,—since  
thine eye kindled  
With soft fire under mine,—I have not  
dwindled,  
Nor changed in mind, or body, or in  
aught  
But as love changes what it loveth not  
After long years and many trials.

\* \* \*

“ How vain

Are words ; I thought never to speak  
again,  
Not even in secret, not to my own  
heart—  
But from my lips the unwilling ac-  
cents start,  
And from my pen the words flow as I  
write,  
Dazzling my eyes with scalding tears  
—my sight  
Is dim to see that (charactered in vain  
On this unfeeling leaf) which burns  
the brain  
And eats into it, blotting all things  
fair,  
And wise and good, which time had  
written there.  
Those who inflict must suffer, for they  
see  
The work of their own hearts, and  
that must be  
Our chastisement or recompense.—O  
child !  
I would that thine were like to be more  
mild  
For both our wretched sakes,—for  
thine the most,  
Who feel'st already all that thou hast  
lost,  
Without the power to wish it thine  
again.  
And, as slow years pass, a funereal  
train,  
Each with the ghost of some lost hope  
or friend  
Following it like its shadow, wilt thou  
bend  
No thought on my dead memory ?

\* \* \*

“ Alas, love !

Fear me not : against thee I'd not  
move  
A finger in despite. Do I not live  
That thou mayst have less bitter cause  
to grieve ?  
I give thee tears for scorn, and love for  
hate ;  
And, that thy lot may be less desolate  
Than his on whom thou tramplest, I  
refrain  
From that sweet sleep which medi-  
cines all pain.  
Then—when thou speakest of me—  
never say,  
' He could forgive not.'—Here I cast  
away  
All human passions, all revenge, all  
pride ;  
I think, speak, act no ill ; I do but hide  
Under these words, like embers, every  
spark  
Of that which has consumed me.  
Quick and dark  
The grave is yawning :—as its roof  
shall cover  
My limbs with dust and worms, under  
and over,  
So let oblivion hide this grief.—The  
air  
Closes upon my accents as despair  
Upon my heart—let death upon my  
care ! ”

He ceased and, overcome, leant back  
awhile ;  
Then rising, with a melancholy smile,  
Went to a sofa, and lay down, and  
slept  
A heavy sleep, and in his dreams he  
wept,  
And muttered some familiar name,  
and we  
Wept without shame in his society.  
I think I never was impressed so  
much !  
The man who was not, must have  
lacked a touch  
Of human nature.—Then we lingered  
not,  
Although our argument was quite  
forgot ;  
But, calling the attendants, went to  
dine  
At Maddalo's ; yet neither cheer nor  
wine

Could give us spirits, for we talked of him,	Unseen, uninterrupted:—books are there,
And nothing else, till daylight made stars dim.	Pictures, and casts from all those statues fair
And we agreed it was some dreadful ill	Which were twin-born with poetry ! —and all
Wrought on him boldly, yet unspeak- able,	We seek in towns, with little to re- call
By a dear friend ; some deadly change in love	Regret for the green country :—I might sit
Of one vowed deeply which he dream- ed not of ;	In Maddalo's great palace, and his wit And subtle talk would cheer the win- ter night,
For whose sake he, it seemed, had fixed a blot	And make me know myself :—and the fire light
Of falsehood in his mind, which flourished not	Would flash upon our faces, till the day
But in the light of all-beholding truth ; And having stamped this canker on his youth,	Might dawn, and make me wonder at my stay.
She had abandoned him :—and how much more,	But I had friends in London too. The chief
Might be his woe, we guessed not :— he had store	Attraction here was that I sought re- lief
Of friends and fortune once, as we could guess	From the deep tenderness that maniac wrought
From his nice habits and his gentle- ness :	Within me—'twas perhaps an idle thought,
These now were lost—it were a grief indeed	But I imagined that if, day by day, I watched him, and seldom went away,
If he had changed one unsustaining reed	And studied all the beatings of his heart
For all that such a man might else adorn.	With zeal, as men study some stub- born art
The colours of his mind seemed yet unworn ;	For their own good, and could by pati- ence find
For the wild language of his grief was high—	An entrance to the caverns of his mind,
Such as in measure were called poetry. And I remember one remark, which then	I might reclaim him from his dark estate.
Maddalo made : he said—" Most wretched men	In friendships I had been most for- tunate,
Are cradled into poetry by wrong : They learn, in suffering what they teach in song."	Yet never saw I one whom I would call
If I had been an unconnected man, I, from the moment, should have formed some plan	More willingly my friend :—and this was all
Never to leave sweet Venice : for to me	Accomplished not ;—such dreams of baseless good
It was delight to ride by the lone sea : And then the town is silent—one may write	Oft come and go, in crowds or soli- tude,
Or read in gondolas, by day or night, Having the little brazen lamp alight,	And leave no trace !—but what I now designed
	Made, for long years, impression on my mind.
	The following morning, urged by my affairs,

I left bright Venice.

After many years,  
And many changes, I returned : the  
name

Of Venice, and its aspect, was the  
same ;

But Maddalo was travelling, far away,  
Among the mountains of Armenia.

His dog was dead : his child had now  
become

A woman, such as it has been my  
doom

To meet with few ; a wonder of this  
Where there is little of transcendent  
worth,—

Like one of Shakspeare's women.  
Kindly she,

And with a manner beyond courtesy,  
Received her father's friend ; and,  
when I asked,

Of the lorn maniac, she her memory  
tasked,

And told, as she had heard, the mourn-  
ful tale :

" That the poor sufferer's health be-  
gan to fail

Two years from my departure : but  
that then

The lady, who had left him, came  
again :

Her mien had been imperious, but she  
now

Looked meek ; perhaps remorse had  
brought her low.

Her coming made him better ; and  
they stayed

Together at my father's,—for I  
played,

As I remember, with the lady's shawl ;  
I might be six years old.—But, after  
all,

She left him."

" Why, her heart must have  
been tough ;  
How did it end ? "

" And was not this enough ?  
They met, they parted."

" Child, is there no more ? "

" Something within that interval  
which bore

The stamp of *why* they parted, *how*  
they met ;—

Yet, if thine aged eyes disdain to wet  
Those wrinkled cheeks with youth's  
remembered tears,

Ask me no more ; but let the silent  
years

Be closed and cered over their  
memory,

As yon mute marble where their  
corpses lie."

I urged and questioned still : she told  
me how

All happened—but the cold world  
shall not know.

### THE WOODMAN AND THE NIGHTINGALE

A WOODMAN whose rough heart was  
out of tune

(I think such hearts yet never came  
to good),

Hated to hear, under the stars or  
moon,

One nightingale in an interfluous  
wood

Satiate the hungry dark with melody.  
And, as a vale is watered by a flood,

Or as the moonlight fills the open sky  
Struggling with darkness—as a tube-  
rose

Peoples some Indian dell with scents  
which lie

Like clouds above the flower from  
which they rose,

The singing of that happy nightingale  
In this sweet forest, from the golden  
close

Of evening till the star of dawn may  
fail,

Was interfused upon the silentness.  
The folded roses and the violets pale

Heard her within their slumbers ; the  
abyss

Of heaven with all its planets ; the  
dull ear

Of the night-cradled earth ; the lone-  
liness

Of the circumfluous waters ; every  
sphere

And every flower and beam and cloud  
and wave,

And every wind of the mute atmo-  
sphere,

And every beast stretched in its  
rugged cave,  
And every bird lulled on its mossy  
bough,  
And every silver moth fresh from the  
grave,

Which is its cradle—ever from below  
Aspiring like one who loves too fair,  
too far,  
To be consumed within the purest  
glow

Of one serene and unapproached star,  
As if it were a lamp of earthly light,  
Unconscious as some human lovers  
are,

Itself how low, how high, beyond all  
height

The heaven where it would perish!—  
and every form

That worshipped in the temple of the  
night

Was awed into delight, and by the  
charm

Girt as with an interminable zone;  
Whilst that sweet bird, whose music  
was a storm

Of sound, shook forth the dull oblivion  
Out of their dreams; harmony be-  
came love

In every soul but one. . . .

And so this man returned with axe  
and saw

At evening close from killing the tall  
treen,

The soul of whom by nature's gentle  
law

Was each a wood nymph, and kept  
ever green

The pavement and the roof of the wild  
copse,

Chequering the sunlight of the blue  
serene

With jagged leaves,—and from the  
forest tops

Singing the winds to sleep—or weep-  
ing oft

Fast showers of aerial water drops

Into their mother's bosom, sweet and  
soft,

S.P.

Nature's pure tears which have no  
bitterness.

Around the cradles of the birds aloft

They spread themselves into the love-  
liness

Of fan-like leaves, and over pallid  
flowers

Hang like moist clouds: or, where  
high branches kiss,

Make a green space among the silent  
bowers—

Like a vast fane in a metropolis,  
Surrounded by the columns and the  
towers

All overwrought with branch-like  
traceries—

In which there is religion, and the  
mute

Persuasion of unkindled melodies,

Odours and gleams and murmurs,  
which the lute

Of the blind pilot-spirit of the blast  
Stirs as it sails, now grave and now  
acute,

Wakening the leaves and waves ere it  
has past

To such brief unison as on the brain  
One tone, which never can recur, has  
cast,

One accent never to return again.

MISERY—A FRAGMENT

COME, be happy!—sit near me,  
Shadow-vested Misery:

Coy, unwilling, silent bride,  
Mourning in thy robe of pride,  
Desolation—deified!

Come, be happy!—sit near me:

Sad as I may seem to thee,  
I am happier far than thou,  
Lady, whose imperial brow  
Is endiademed with woe.

Misery! we have known each other,  
Like a sister and a brother  
Living in the same lone home,  
Many years—we must live some  
Hours or ages yet to come.

'Tis an evil lot, and yet  
Let us make the best of it.



If love can live when pleasure dies,  
We two will love, till in our eyes  
This heart's Hell seem Paradise.

Come, be happy !—lie thee down  
On the fresh grass newly mown,  
Where the grasshopper doth sing  
Merrily—one joyous thing  
In a world of sorrowing !

There our tent shall be the willow,  
And mine arm shall be thy pillow :  
Sounds and odours, sorrowful  
Because they once were sweet, shall  
lull

Us to slumber deep and dull.

Ha ! thy frozen pulses flutter  
With a love thou dar'st not utter.  
Thou art murmuring—thou art weep-  
ing—

Is thine icy bosom leaping  
While my burning heart lies sleeping ?

Kiss me ;—oh ! thy lips are cold ;  
Round my neck thine arms enfold—  
They are soft, but chill and dead ;  
And thy tears upon my head  
Burn like points of frozen lead.

Hasten to the bridal bed—  
Underneath the grave 'tis spread :  
In darkness may our love be hid,  
Oblivion be our coverlid—  
We may rest, and none forbid.

Clasp me, till our hearts be grown  
Like two shadows into one ;  
Till this dreadful transport may  
Like a vapour fade away  
In the sleep that lasts alway.

We may dream in that long sleep,  
That we are not those who weep ;  
Even as Pleasure dreams of thee,  
Life-deserting Misery,  
Thou mayst dream of her with me.

Let us laugh, and make our mirth,  
At the shadows of the earth,  
As dogs bay the moonlight clouds,  
Which, like spectres wrapt in shrouds,  
Pass o'er night in multitudes.

All the wide world, beside us  
Show like multitudinous  
Puppets passing from a scene ;  
What but mockery can they mean,  
Where I am—where thou hast been ?

### TO MARY —

O MARY dear, that you were here  
With your brown eyes bright and  
clear,

And your sweet voice, like a bird  
Singing love to its lone mate  
In the ivy bower disconsolate ;  
Voice the sweetest ever heard !  
And your brow more \* \* \*  
Than the \* \* \* sky  
Of this azure Italy.

Mary dear, come to me soon,  
I am not well whilst thou art far ;  
As sunset to the sphered moon,  
As twilight to the western star,  
Thou, beloved, art to me.

O Mary dear, that you were here !  
The Castle echo whispers " Here ! "

ESTE, *September*, 1818.

### PASSAGE OF THE APENNINES

LISTEN, listen, Mary mine,  
To the whisper of the Apennine,  
It bursts on the roof like the thunder's  
roar,

Or like the sea on a northern shore,  
Heard in its raging ebb and flow  
By the captives pent in the cave  
below.

The Apennine in the light of day  
Is a mighty mountain dim and grey,  
Which between the earth and sky  
doth lay ;  
But when night comes, a chaos dread  
On the dim starlight then is spread,  
And the Apennine walks abroad with  
the storm.

### ON A FADED VIOLET

THE colour from the flower is gone,  
Which like thy sweet eyes smiled  
on me ;

The odour from the flower is flown,  
Which breathed of thee and only  
thee !

A withered, lifeless, vacant form,  
It lies on my abandoned breast,  
And mocks the heart which yet is  
warm  
With cold and silent rest.

I weep—my tears revive it not ;  
 I sigh—it breathes no more on me ;  
 Its mute and uncomplaining lot  
 Is such as mine should be.

## STANZAS

WRITTEN IN DEJECTION, NEAR NAPLES

THE sun is warm, the sky is clear,  
 The waves are dancing fast and  
 bright,  
 Blue isles and snowy mountains  
 wear  
 The purple noon's transparent  
 light :  
 The breath of the moist air is light,  
 Around its unexpanded buds ;  
 Like many a voice of one delight,  
 The winds, the birds, the ocean  
 floods,  
 The City's voice itself is soft like  
 Solitude's.

I see the Deep's untrampled floor  
 With green and purple seaweeds  
 strown ;  
 I see the waves upon the shore,  
 Like light dissolved in star show-  
 ers, thrown :  
 I sit upon the sands alone,  
 The lightning of the noontide  
 ocean  
 Is flashing round me, and a tone  
 Arises from its measured motion,  
**How sweet ! did any heart now share**  
**in my emotion.**

Alas ! I have nor hope nor health,  
 Nor peace within nor calm  
 around,  
 Nor that content surpassing wealth  
 The sage in meditation found,  
 And walked with inward glory  
 crowned—  
 Nor 'ame, nor power, nor love,  
 nor leisure.

Others I see whom these sur-  
 round—  
 Smiling they live, and call life  
 pleasure ;—  
**To me that cup has been dealt in**  
**another measure.**

Yet now despair itself is mild,  
 Even as the winds and waters  
 are :

I could lie down like a tired child,  
 And weep away the life of care  
 Which I have borne, and yet must  
 bear,  
 Till death like sleep might steal  
 on me,  
 And I might feel in the warm air  
 My cheek grow cold, and hear  
 the sea  
 Breathe o'er my dying brain its last  
 monotony.

Some might lament that I were  
 cold,  
 As I when this sweet day is gone,  
 Which my lost heart, too soon  
 grown old,  
 Insults with this untimely moan ;  
 They might lament—for I am one  
 Whom men love not,—and yet  
 regret,  
 Unlike this day, which, when the  
 sun  
 Shall on its stainless glory set,  
 Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy  
 in memory yet. •

## SONG FOR TASSO

I loved—alas ! our life is love ;  
 But when we cease to breathe and  
 move,  
 I do suppose love ceases too.  
 I thought, but not as now I do,  
 Keen thoughts and bright of linked  
 lore,  
 Of all that men had thought before,  
 And all that Nature shows, and more.

And still I love, and still I think,  
 But strangely, for my heart can drink  
 The dregs of such despair, and live,  
 And love ;  
 And if I think, my thoughts come  
 fast ;  
 I mix the present with the past,  
 And each seems uglier than the last.

Sometimes I see before me flee  
 A silver spirit's form, like thee,  
 O Leonora, and I sit  
 [ ] still watching it,  
 Till by the grated casement's ledge  
 It fades, with such a sigh, as sedge  
 Breathes o'er the breezy streamlet's  
 edge.

## THE PAST

WILT thou forget the happy hours  
Which we buried in Love's sweet  
bowers,  
Heaping over their corpses cold  
Blossoms and leaves instead of  
mould ?  
Blossoms which were the joys that  
fell,  
And leaves, the hopes that yet  
remain.

Forget the dead, the past ? O yet  
There are ghosts that may take re-  
venge for it ;  
Memories that make the heart a tomb,  
Regrets which glide through the  
spirit's gloom,  
And with ghastly whispers tell  
That joy, once lost, is pain.

MAZENGI<sup>1</sup>

O ! FOSTER-NURSE of man's aban-  
doned glory  
Since Athens, its great mother, sunk  
in splendour,  
Thou shadowest forth that mighty  
shape in story,  
As ocean its wrecked fanes, severe yet  
tender :  
The light invested angel Poesy  
Was drawn from the dim world to  
welcome thee.

And thou in painting didst transcribe  
all taught  
By loftiest meditations ; marble knew  
The sculptor's fearless soul—and, as  
he wrought,  
The grace of his own power and free-  
dom grew.  
And more than all, heroic, just, sub-  
lime,  
Thou wert among the false—was this  
thy crime ?

Yes ; and on Pisa's marble walls the  
twine  
Of direst weed hangs garlanded—the  
snake

<sup>1</sup> This fragment refers to an event, told in  
Sismondi's *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes*,  
which occurred during the war when Florence  
finally subdued Pisa, and reduced it to a  
province. The opening stanzas are addressed to  
the conquering city.—M, S,

Inhabits its wrecked palaces ;—in  
thine  
A beast of subtler venom now doth  
make  
Its lair, and sits amid their glories  
overthrown,  
And thus thy victim's fate is as thine  
own.

The sweetest flowers are ever frail  
and rare,  
And love and freedom blossom but to  
wither ;  
And good and ill like vines entangled  
are,  
So that their grapes may oft be  
plucked together ;  
Divide the vintage ere thou drink,  
then make  
Thy heart rejoice for dead Mazenghi's  
sake.

No record of his crime remains in  
story,  
But if the morning bright as evening  
shone,  
It was some high and holy deed, by  
glory  
Pursued into forgetfulness, which won  
From the blind crowd he made secure  
and free  
The Patriot's meed, toil, death, and  
infamy.

For when by sound of trumpet was de-  
clared  
A price upon his life, and there was set  
A penalty of blood on all who shared  
So much of water with him as might  
wet  
His lips, which speech divided not—  
he went  
Alone, as you may guess, to banish-  
ment.

Amid the mountains, like a hunted  
beast,  
He hid himself, and hunger, toil, and  
cold,  
Month after month endured ; it was  
a feast  
Whene'er he found those globes of  
deep red gold  
Which in the woods the strawberry-  
tree doth bear,  
Suspended in their emerald atmo-  
sphere.

And in the roofless huts of vast morasses,  
Deserted by the fever-stricken serf,  
All overgrown with reeds and long  
rank grasses,  
And hillocks heaped of moss-inwoven turf,  
[made,  
And where the huge and speckled aloe  
Rooted in stones, a broad and pointed  
shade,

He housed himself. There is a point  
of strand  
Near Vada's tower and town ; and on  
one side  
The treacherous marsh divides it from  
the land,  
Shadowed by pine and ilex forests  
wide ;  
And on the other creeps eternally,  
Through muddy weeds, the shallow  
sullen sea.

NAPLES, 1818.

SONNET

LIFT not the painted veil which those  
who live

Call life ; though unreal shapes be  
pictured there,  
And it but mimic all we would be-  
lieve  
With colours idly spread,—behind,  
lurk Fear  
And Hope, twin Destinies ; who ever  
weave  
Their shadows, o'er the chasm, sight-  
less and drear.

I knew one who had lifted it—he  
sought,  
For his lost heart was tender, things  
to love,  
But found them not, alas ! nor was  
there aught  
The world contains, the which he  
could approve.  
Through the unheeding many he did  
move,  
A splendour among shadows, a bright  
blot  
Upon this gloomy scene, a Spirit  
that strove  
For truth, and like the Preacher  
found it not.

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1819

THE MASQUE OF ANARCHY

I

As I lay asleep in Italy,  
There came a voice from over the sea,  
And with great power it forth led me  
To walk in the visions of Poesy.



II

I met Murder on the way—  
He had a mask like Castlereagh—  
Very smooth he looked, yet grim ;  
Seven bloodhounds followed him :

III

All were fat ; and well they might  
Be in admirable plight,  
For one by one, and two by two,  
He tossed them human hearts to  
chew,  
Which from his white cloak he drew.

IV

Next came Fraud, and he had on  
Like Lord E——, an ermine gown ;  
His big tears, for he wept well,  
Turned to millstones as they fell ;

V

And the little children, who  
Round his feet played to and fro,  
Thinking every tear a gem,  
Had their brains knocked out by  
them.

VI

Clothed with the Bible as with light,  
And the shadow of the night,  
Like S \* \* \* next, Hypocrisy,  
On a crocodile came by.

## VII

And many more Destructions played  
In this ghastly masquerade,  
All disguised, even to the eyes,  
Like bishops, lawyers, peers, or spies.

## VIII

Last came Anarchy; he rode  
On a white horse splashed with blood;  
He was pale even to the lips,  
Like Death in the Apocalypse.

## IX

And he wore a kingly crown;  
In his hand a sceptre shone;  
On his brow this mark I saw—  
"I am God, and King, and Law!"

## X

With a pace stately and fast,  
Over English land he past,  
Trampling to a mire of blood  
The adoring multitude.

## XI

And a mighty troop around,  
With their trampling shook the  
ground,  
Waving each a bloody sword,  
For the service of their Lord.

## XII

And, with glorious triumph, they  
Rode through England, proud and  
gay,  
Drunk as with intoxication,  
Of the wine of desolation.

## XIII

O'er fields and towns, from sea to sea,  
Passed the pageant swift and free,  
Tearing up, and trampling down,  
Till they came to London town.

## XIV

And each dweller, panic-stricken,  
Felt his heart with terror sicken,  
Hearing the tremendous cry  
Of the triumph of Anarchy.

## XV

For with pomp to meet him came,  
Clothed in arms like blood and flame,  
The hired murderers who did sing,  
"Thou art God, and Law, and King."

## XVI

"We have waited, weak and lone,  
For thy coming, Mighty One!"

Our purses are empty, our swords are  
cold,  
Give us glory, and blood, and gold."

## XVII

Lawyers and priests, a motley crowd,  
To the earth their pale brows bowed.  
Like a bad prayer not over loud,  
Whispering—"Thou art Law and  
God!"

## XVIII

Then all cried with one accord,  
"Thou art King, and Law, and Lord:  
Anarchy, to thee we bow,  
Be thy name made holy now!"

## XIX

And Anarchy, the skeleton,  
Bowed and grinned to every one,  
As well as if his education.  
Had cost ten millions to the nation.

## XX

For he knew the palaces  
Of our kings were nightly his;  
His the sceptre, crown, and globe,  
And the gold-inwoven robe.

## XXI

So he sent his slaves before  
To seize upon the Bank and Tower,  
And was proceeding with intent  
To meet his pensioned Parliament,

## XXII

When one fled past, a maniac maid,  
And her name was Hope, she said:  
But she looked more like Despair  
And she cried out in the air:

## XXIII

"My father Time is weak and grey  
With waiting for a better day;  
See how idiot-like he stands,  
Trembling with his palsied hands!"

## XXIV

"He has had child after child,  
And the dust of death is piled  
Over every one but me—  
Misery! oh, Misery!"

## XXV

Then she lay down in the street,  
Right before the horses' feet,  
Expecting, with a patient eye,  
Murder, Fraud, and Anarchy.

## XXVI

When between her and her foes  
A mist, a light, an image rose,

Small at first, and weak and frail  
Like the vapour of the vale :

## XXVII

Till as clouds grow on the blast,  
Like tower-crowned giants striding  
fast,  
And glare with lightnings as they fly,  
And speak in thunder to the sky,

## XXVIII

It grew—a shape arrayed in mail  
Brighter than the viper's scale,  
And upborne on wings whose grain  
Was like the light of sunny rain.

## XXIX

On its helm, seen far away,  
A planet, like the morning's, lay ;  
And those plumes it light rained  
through,  
Like a shower of crimson dew.

## XXX

With step as soft as wind it passed  
O'er the heads of men—so fast  
That they knew the presence there,  
And looked—and all was empty air.

## XXXI

As flowers beneath May's footsteps  
waken,  
As stars from night's loose hair are  
shaken,  
As waves arise when loud winds call,  
Thoughts sprung where'er that step  
did fall.

## XXXII

And the prostrate multitude  
Looked—and ankle-deep in blood,  
Hope, that maiden most serene,  
Was walking with a quiet mien :

## XXXIII

And Anarchy, the ghastly birth,  
Lay dead earth upon the earth ;  
The Horse of Death, tameless as wind,  
Fled, and with his hoofs did grind  
To dust the murderers thronged be-  
hind.

## XXXIV

A rushing light of clouds and splend-  
our,  
A sense, awakening and yet tender,  
Was heard and felt—and at its close  
These words of joy and fear arose ;

## XXXV

As if their own indignant earth,  
Which gave the sons of England birth,  
Had felt their blood upon her brow,  
And shuddering with a mother's  
throe,

## XXXVI

Had turned every drop of blood,  
By which her face had been bedewed,  
To an accent unwithstood,  
As if her heart had cried aloud—

## XXXVII

" Men of England, Heirs of Glory,  
Heroes of unwritten story,  
Nurslings of one mighty mother,  
Hopes of her, and one another !

## XXXVIII

" Rise, like lions after slumber,  
In unvanquishable number,  
Shake your chains to earth like dew,  
Which in sleep had fall'n on you !  
Ye are many, they are few.

## XXXIX

" What is freedom ? Ye can tell  
That which Slavery is too well,  
For its very name has grown  
To an echo of your own.

## XL

" 'Tis to work, and have such pay  
As just keeps life from day to day  
In your limbs as in a cell  
For the tyrants' use to dwell :

## XLI

" So that ye for them are made,  
Loom, and plough, and sword, and  
spade ;  
With or without your own will, bent  
To their defence and nourishment.

## XLII

" 'Tis to see your children weak  
With their mothers pine and peak,  
When the winter winds are bleak :-  
They are dying whilst I speak.

## XLIII

" 'Tis to hunger for such diet,  
As the rich man in his riot  
Casts to the fat dogs that lie  
Surfeiting beneath his eye.

## XLIV

" 'Tis to let the Ghost of Gold  
Take from toil a thousandfold

More than e'er his substance could  
In the tyrannies of old :

## XLV

" Paper coin—that forgery  
Of the title-deeds, which ye  
Hold to something of the worth  
Of the inheritance of Earth.

## XLVI

" 'Tis to be a slave in soul,  
And to hold no strong controul  
Over your own wills, but be  
All that others make of ye.

## XLVII

" And at length when ye complain,  
With a murmur weak and vain,  
'Tis to see the tyrant's crew  
Ride, over your wives and you :—  
Blood is on the grass like dew !

## XLVIII

" Then it is to feel revenge,  
Fiercely thirsting to exchange  
Blood for blood—and wrong for  
wrong :  
Do not thus when ye are strong !

## XLIX

" Birds find rest in narrow nest,  
When weary of their winged quest ;  
Beasts find fare in woody lair,  
When storm and snow are in the air.

## L

" Horses, oxen, have a home,  
When from daily toil they come ;  
Household dogs, when the wind roars,  
Find a home within warm doors.

## LI

" Asses, swine, have litter spread,  
And with fitting food are fed ;  
All things have a home but one :  
Thou, O Englishman, hast none !

## LII

" This is slavery—savage men,  
Or wild beasts within a den,  
Would endure not as ye do :  
But such ills they never knew.

## LIII

" What are thou, Freedom ? Oh !  
could slaves  
Answer from their living graves  
This demand, tyrants would flee  
Like a dream's dim imagery.

## LIV

" Thou art not, as impostors say,  
A shadow soon to pass away,  
A superstition, and a name  
Echoing from the cave of Fame.

## LV

" For the labourer thou art bread  
And a comely table spread,  
From his daily labour come,  
In a neat and happy home.

## LVI

" Thou art clothes, and fire, and  
food  
For the trampled multitude :  
No—in countries that are free  
Such starvation cannot be,  
As in England now we see.

## LVII

" To the rich thou art a check ;  
When his foot is on the neck  
Of his victim, thou dost make  
That he treads upon a snake.

## LVIII

" Thou art Justice—ne'er for gold  
May thy righteous laws be sold,  
As laws are in England :—thou  
Shieldest alike the high and low.

## LIX

" Thou art Wisdom—freemen never  
Dream that God will doom for ever  
All who think those things untrue  
Of which priests make such ado.

## LX

" Thou art Peace—never by thee  
Would blood and treasure wasted be,  
As tyrants wasted them, when all  
Leagued to quench thy flame in  
Gaul.

## LXI

" What if English toil and blood  
Was poured forth, even as a flood ?  
It availed,—O Liberty !  
To dim—but not extinguish thee.

## LXII

" Thou art Love—the rich have kissed  
Thy feet ; and like him following  
Christ,  
Given their substance to the free,  
And through the rough world fol-  
lowed thee.

LXIII

" Oh ! turn their wealth to arms, and  
make  
War for thy beloved sake,  
On wealth and war and fraud ;  
whence they  
Drew the power which is their prey.

LXIV

" Science, and Poetry, and Thought,  
Are thy Lamps ; they make the lot  
Of the dwellers in a cot  
Such, they curse their maker not.

LXV

" Spirit, Patience, Gentleness,  
All that can adorn and bless,  
Art thou : let deeds, not words,  
express  
Thine exceeding loveliness.

LXVI

" Let a great assembly be  
Of the fearless and the free,  
On some spot of English ground,  
Where the plains stretch wide around.

LXVII

" Let the blue sky overhead,  
The green earth on which ye tread  
All that must eternal be,  
Witness the solemnity.

LXVIII

" From the corners uttermost  
Of the bounds of English coast ;  
From every hut, village, and town,  
Where those who live and suffer,  
moan  
For others' misery, or their own :

LXIX

" From the workhouse and the  
prison,  
Where pale as corpses newly risen,  
Women, children, young and old,  
Groan for pain, and weep for cold ;

LXX

" From the haunts of daily life,  
Where is waged the daily strife  
With common wants and common  
cares,  
Which sow the human heart with  
tares ;

LXXI

" Lastly, from the palaces,  
Where the murmur of distress  
Echoes, like the distant sound  
Of a wind, alive around ;

LXXII

" Those prison-halls of wealth and  
fashion,  
Where some few feel such compassion  
For those who groan, and toil, and  
wail,  
As must make their brethren pale ;

LXXIII

" Ye who suffer woes untold,  
Or to feel, or to behold  
Your lost country bought and sold  
With a price of blood and gold !

LXXIV

" Let a vast assembly be,  
And with great solemnity  
Declare with ne'er said words, that  
ye  
Are, as God has made ye, free.

LXXV

" Be your strong and simple words  
Keen to wound as sharpened swords,  
And wide as targets let them be,  
With their shade to cover ye.

LXXVI

" Let the tyrants pour around  
With a quick and startling sound,  
Like the loosening of a sea,  
Troops of armed emblazonry.

LXXVII

" Let the charged artillery drive,  
Till the dead air seems alive  
With the clash of clanging wheels  
And the tramp of horses' heels.

LXXVIII

" Let the fixed bayonet  
Gleam with sharp desire to wet  
Its bright point in English blood,  
Looking keen as one for food.

LXXIX

" Let the horsemen's scimitars  
Wheel and flash, like sphereless stars  
Thirsting to eclipse their burning  
In a sea of death and mourning.

LXXX

" Stand ye calm and resolute,  
Like a forest close and mute,  
With folded arms, and looks which  
are  
Weapons of an unvanquished war.

LXXXI

" And let Panic, who outspeeds  
The career of armed steeds,



Pass, a disregarded shade,  
Through your phalanx undismayed.

LXXXII

"Let the laws of your own land,  
Good or ill, between ye stand,  
Hand to hand, and foot to foot,  
Arbiters of the dispute.

LXXXIII

"The old laws of England—they  
Whose reverend heads with age are  
grey,  
Children of a wiser day;  
And whose solemn voice must be  
Thine own echo—Liberty!

LXXXIV

"On those who first should violate  
Such sacred heralds in their state,  
Rest the blood that must ensue;  
And it will not rest on you.

LXXXV

"And if then the tyrants dare,  
Let them ride among you there;  
Slash, and stab, and maim, and hew  
What they like, that let them do.

LXXXVI

"With folded arms and steady eyes,  
And little fear, and less surprise,  
Look upon them as they slay,  
Till their rage has died away:

LXXXVII

"Then they will return with shame,  
To the place from which they came,  
And the blood thus shed will speak  
In hot blushes on their cheek:

LXXXVIII

"Every woman in the land  
Will point at them as they stand—  
They will hardly dare to greet  
Their acquaintance in the street:

LXXXIX

"And the bold true warriors,  
Who have hugged danger in the wars,  
Will turn to those who would be free  
Ashamed of such base company:

XC

"And that slaughter to the nation  
Shall steam up like inspiration,  
Eloquent, oracular,  
A volcano heard afar:

XCI

"And these words shall then become,  
Like Oppression's thundered doom,  
Ringing through each heart and brain  
Heard again—again—again!

XCII

"Rise, like lions after slumber  
In unvanquishable number!  
Shake your chains to earth, like dew  
Which in sleep had fallen on you:  
Ye are many—they are few!"

## PETER BELL THE THIRD

By MICHING MALFCHO, Esq.

Is it a party in a parlour,  
Crammed just as they on earth were  
crammed,

Some sipping punch—some sipping tea,  
But, as you by their faces see,  
All silent, and all—damned!

*Peter Bell*, by W. WORDSWORTH.

OPHELIA.—What means this, my lord?

HAMLET.—Marry, this is Miching Mal-  
lecho; it means mischief.

SHAKESPEARE

### DEDICATION.

TO THOMAS BROWN, ESQ., THE  
YOUNGER, H.F.

DEAR TOM,—Allow me to request  
you to introduce Mr. Peter Bell to  
the respectable family of the Fudges;  
although he may fall short of those  
very considerable personages in the

more active properties which charac-  
terize the Rat and the Apostate, I  
suspect that even you, their historian,  
will confess that he surpasses them  
in the more peculiarly legitimate  
qualification of intolerable dullness..

You know Mr. Examiner Hunt;  
well—it was he who presented me to  
two of the Mr. Bells. My intimacy  
with the younger Mr. Bell naturally  
sprung from this introduction to his  
brothers. And in presenting him to  
you, I have the satisfaction of being  
able to assure you that he is con-  
siderably the dullest of the three.

There is this particular advantage  
in an acquaintance with any one of  
the Peter Bells, that if you know one  
Peter Bell, you know three Peter

Bells; they are not one, but three; not three, but one. An awful mystery, which, after having caused torrents of blood, and having been hymned by groans enough to deafen the music of the spheres, is at length illustrated to the satisfaction of all parties in the theological world, by the nature of Mr. Peter Bell.

Peter is a polyhedric Peter, or a Peter with many sides. He changes colours like a chameleon, and his coat like a snake. He is a Proteus of a Peter. He was at first sublime, pathetic, impressive, profound; then dull; then prosy and dull; and now dull—O, so very dull! it is an ultra-legitimate dullness.

You will perceive that it is not necessary to consider Hell and the Devil as supernatural machinery. The whole scene of my epic is in "this world which is"—so Peter informed us before his conversion to *White Obi*—

—The world of all of us, and where  
*We find our happiness, or not at all.*

Let me observe that I have spent six or seven days in composing this sublime piece; the orb of my moonlight genius has made the fourth part of its revolution round the dull earth which you inhabit, driving you mad, while it has retained its calmness and its splendour, and I have been fitting this its last phase "to occupy a permanent station in the literature of my country."

Your works, indeed, dear Tom, sell better; but mine are far superior. The public is no judge; posterity sets all to rights.

Allow me to observe that so much has been written of Peter Bell, that the present history can be considered only, like the *Iliad*, as a continuation of that series of cyclic poems, which have already been candidates for bestowing immortality upon, at the same time that they receive it from, his character and adventures. In this point of view, I have violated no rule of Syntax in beginning my composition with a conjunction; the full stop which closes the poem continued by me, being, like the full

stops at the end of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, a full stop of a very qualified import.

Hoping that the immortality which you have given to the Fudges, you will receive from them; and in the firm expectation, that when London shall be an habitation of bitterns, when St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey shall stand, shapeless and nameless ruins, in the midst of an unpeopled marsh; when the piers of Waterloo Bridge shall become the nuclei of islets of reeds and osiers and cast the jagged shadows of their broken arches on the solitary stream, some transatlantic commentator will be weighing in the scales of some new and now unimagined system of criticism, the respective merits of the Bells and the Fudges, and their historians,

I remain, dear Tom,

Yours sincerely,

MICHING MALLECHO.

December 1, 1819.

P.S.—Pray excuse the date of place; so soon as the profits of the publication come in, I mean to hire lodgings in a more respectable street.

## PROLOGUE

PETER BELLS, one, two and three,  
O'er the wide world wandering be.—  
First, the antenatal Peter,  
Wrapt in weeds of the same metre,  
The so long predestined raiment  
Clothed, in which to walk his way  
meant

The second Peter; whose ambition  
Is to link the proposition,  
As the mean of two extremes—  
(This was learnt from Aldrich's  
themes)

Shielding from the guilt of schism  
The orthodox syllogism;  
The First Peter—he who was  
Like the shadow in the glass  
Of the second, yet unripe,  
His substantial antitype.—  
Then came Peter Bell the Second,  
Who henceforward must be reckoned  
The body of a double soul,  
And that portion of the whole  
Without which the rest would seem

Ends of a disjointed dream.—  
And the Third is he who has  
O'er the grave been forced to pass  
To the other side, which is,—  
Go and try else,—just like this.

Peter Bell the First was Peter  
Smugger, milder, softer, neater,  
Like the soul before it is  
Born from *that* world into *this*.  
The next Peter Bell was he  
Predevote, like you and me,  
To good or evil as may come ;  
His was the severer doom,—  
For he was an evil Cotter  
And a polygamic Potter.<sup>1</sup>

And the last is Peter Bell,  
Damned since our first parents fell,  
Damned, eternally to Hell—  
Surely he deserves it well !

#### PART THE FIRST

##### DEATH

AND Peter Bell, when he had been  
With fresh-imported hell-fire  
warmed,  
Grew serious—from his dress and  
mien

'Twas very plainly to be seen  
Peter was quite reformed.

His eyes turned up, his mouth turned  
down,

His accent caught a nasal twang ;  
He oiled his hair,<sup>2</sup> there might be  
heard

The grace of God in every word  
Which Peter said or sang.

But Peter now grew old, and had  
An ill no doctor could unravel ;  
His torments almost drove him  
mad ;—

<sup>1</sup> The oldest scholiasts read—

A *dodecagamic* Potter.

This is at once more descriptive and more megalophonous,—but the alliteration of the text had captivated the vulgar ear of the herd of later commentators.

<sup>2</sup> To those who have not duly appreciated the distinction between *Whale* and *Russia* oil, this attribute might rather seem to belong to the Dandy than the Evangelic. The effect, when to the windward, is indeed so similar, that it requires a subtle naturalist to discriminate the animals. They belong, however, to distinct genera.

Some said it was a fever bad—  
Some swore it was the gravel.

His holy friends then came about,  
And with long preaching and persuasion,

Convinced the patient that, without  
The smallest shadow of a doubt  
He was predestined to damnation.

They said—" Thy name is Peter Bell,  
Thy skin is of a brimstone hue ;  
Alive or dead—ay, sick or well—  
The one God made to rhyme with  
hell ;  
The other, I think, rhymes with  
you."

Then Peter set up such a yell !—  
The nurse, who with some water  
gruel

Was climbing up the stairs, as well  
As her old legs could climb them—fell  
And broke them both—the fall  
was cruel.

The Parson from the casement leapt  
Into the lake of Windermere—  
And many an eel—though no adept  
In God's right reason for it—kept  
Gnawing his kidneys half a year.

And all the rest rushed through the  
door,

And tumbled over one another,  
And broke their skulls.—Upon the  
floor

Meanwhile sat Peter Bell, and swore,  
And cursed his father and his  
mother ;

And raved of God, and sin, and  
death,

Blaspheming like an infidel ;  
And said, that with his clenched  
teeth,

He'd seize the earth from underneath,  
And drag it with him down to hell.

As he was speaking came a spasm,  
And wrenched his gnashing teeth  
asunder

Like one who sees a strange phantasm  
He lay,—there was a silent chasm  
Betwixt his upper jaw and under.

And yellow death lay on his face ;  
And a fixed smile that was not  
human

Told, as I understand the case,  
That he was gone to the wrong  
place :—

I heard all this from the old woman.

Then there came down from Lang-  
dale Pike

A cloud, with lightning, wind and  
hail ;

It swept over the mountains like  
An ocean,—and I heard it strike

The woods and crags of Grasmere  
vale.

And I saw the black storm come  
Nearer, minute after minute ;

Its thunder made the cataracts  
dumb ;

With hiss, and clash, and hollow  
hum,

It neared as if the Devil was in it.

The Devil *was* in it :—he had bought  
Peter for half-a-crown ; and when

The storm which bore him vanished,  
nought

That in the house that storm had  
caught

Was ever seen again.

The gaping neighbours came next  
day—

They found all vanished from the  
shore :

The Bible, whence he used to pray,  
Half scorched under a hencoop lay ;

Smashed glass—and nothing more !

## PART THE SECOND

### THE DEVIL

THE DEVIL, I safely can aver,  
Has neither hoof, nor tail, nor  
sting ;

Nor is he, as some sages swear,  
A spirit, neither here nor there,  
In nothing—yet in everything.

He is—what we are ; for sometimes  
The Devil is a gentleman ;

At others a bard bartering rhymes  
For sack ; a statesman spinning

crimes ;  
A swindler, living as he can ;

A thief, who cometh in the night,  
With whole boots and net panta-  
loons,

Like someone whom it were not  
right

To mention ;—or the luckless wight,  
From whom he steals nine silver  
spoons.

But in this case he did appear  
Like a slop-merchant from Wap-  
ping,

And with smug face, and eye severe,  
On every side did perk and peer

Till he saw Peter dead or napping.

He had on an upper Benjamin  
(For he was of the driving schism)

In the which he wrapt his skin  
From the storm he travelled in,

For fear of rheumatism.

He called the ghost out of the  
course ;—

It was exceedingly like Peter,—  
Only its voice was hollow and  
hoarse—

It had a queerish look of course—  
Its dress too was a little neater.

The Devil knew not his name and lot,  
Peter knew not that he was Bell :

Each had an upper stream of thought,  
Which made all seem as it was not ;

Fitting itself to all things well.

Peter thought he had parents dear,  
Brothers, sisters, cousins, cronies,

In the fens of Lincolnshire ;  
He perhaps had found them there

Had he gone and boldly shown his

Solemn phiz in his own village ;  
Where he thought oft when a boy

He'd clomb the orchard walls to  
pillage

The produce of his neighbour's  
tillage,

With marvellous pride and joy.

And the Devil thought he had,  
'Mid the misery and confusion

Of an unjust war, just made  
A fortune by the gainful trade

Of giving soldiers rations bad—  
The world is full of strange delu-  
sion.

That he had a mansion planned  
In a square like Grosvenor Square,

That he was aping fashion, and  
That he now came to Westmoreland

To see what was romantic there.

And all this, though quite ideal,—  
Ready at a breath to vanish,—  
Was a state not more unreal  
Than the peace he could not feel,  
Or the care he could not banish.

After a little conversation,  
The Devil told Peter, if he chose,  
He'd bring him to the world of  
fashion  
By giving him a situation  
In his own service—and new  
clothes.

And Peter bowed, quite pleased and  
proud,

And after waiting some few days  
For a new livery—dirty yellow  
Turned up with black—the wretched  
fellow

Was bowled to Hell in the Devil's  
chaise.

### PART THE THIRD

#### HELL

HELL is a city much like London—

A populous and a smoky city;  
There are all sorts of people undone,  
And there is little or no fun done;  
Small justice shown, and still  
less pity.

There is a Castles, and a Canning,  
A Cobbett and a Castlereagh;  
All sorts of caitiff corpses planning.  
All sorts of cozening for trepanning  
Corpses less corrupt than they.

There is a \*\*\*, who has lost  
His wits, or sold them, none knows  
which;

He walks about a double ghost,  
And though as thin as Fraud almost—  
Ever grows more grim and rich.

There is a Chancery Court; a King;  
A manufacturing mob; a set  
Of thieves who by themselves are  
sent

Similar thieves to represent;  
An army; and a public debt.

Which last is a scheme of paper  
money,

And means—being interpreted—  
"Bees, keep your wax—give us the  
honey,

And we will plant, while skies are  
sunny,  
Flowers, which in winter serve  
instead."

There is great talk of revolution—  
And a great chance of despotism—  
German soldiers — camps — confu-  
sion— [sion—  
Tumults — lotteries — rage — delu-  
gin—suicide—and Methodism.

Taxes too, on wine and bread,  
And meat, and beer, and tea, and  
cheese,  
From which those patriots pure are  
fed,

Who gorge before they reel to bed,  
The tenfold essence of all these.

There are mincing women, mewing,  
(Like cats, who *amant misère*,<sup>1</sup>)  
Of their own virtue, and pursuing  
Their gentler sisters to that ruin,  
Without which—what were chas-  
tity?<sup>2</sup>

Lawyers—judges—old hobnobbers  
Are there—bailiffs—chancellors—  
Bishops—great and little robbers—  
Rhymesters — pamphleteers—stock-  
jobbers—  
Men of glory in the wars,—

Things whose trade is, over ladies  
To lean, and flirt, and stare, and  
simper,  
Till all that is divine in woman  
Grows cruel, courteous, smooth, in-  
human,  
Crucified 'twixt a smile and whim-  
per.

Thrusting, toiling, wailing, moiling,  
Frowning, preaching—such a riot!  
Each with never-ceasing labour,

<sup>1</sup> One of the attributes in Linnaeus's descrip-  
tion of the Cat. To a similar cause the cater-  
wauling of more than one species of this genus  
is to be referred; except, indeed, that the poor  
quadruped is compelled to quarrel with its own  
pleasures, whilst the biped is supposed only to  
quarrel with those of others.

<sup>2</sup> What would this husk and excuse for a  
virtue be without its kernel prostitution, or the  
kernel prostitution without this husk of a  
virtue? I wonder the women of the town do  
not form an association, like the Society for the  
Suppression of Vice, for the support of what  
may be called the "King, Church, and Constitu-  
tion" of their order. But this subject is almost  
too horrible for a joke.

Whilst he thinks he cheats his  
neighbour,  
Cheating his own heart of quiet.

And all these meet at levées ;—  
Dinners convivial and political ;—  
Suppers of epic poets ;—teas,  
Where small-talk dies in agonies ;—  
Breakfasts professional and critical ;

Lunches and snacks so aldermanic  
That one would furnish forth ten  
dinners,  
Where reigns a Cretan-tongued panic,  
Lest news Russ, Dutch, 'or Alemannic,  
Should make some losers, and  
some winners,

At conversazioni—bulls—  
Conventicles — and drawing-  
rooms—

Courts of law—committees—calls  
Of a morning—clubs—book-stalls—  
Churches — masquerades — and  
tombs.

And this is Hell—and in this smother  
All are damnable and damned ;  
Each one damning, damns the other ;  
They are damned by one another,  
By none other are they damned.

'Tis a lie to say, " God damns ! " <sup>1</sup>  
Where was Heaven's Attorney-  
General

When they first gave out such flams ?  
Let there be an end of shams,  
They are mines of poisonous  
mineral.

Statesmen damn themselves to be  
Cursed ; and lawyers damn their  
souls

To the auction of a fee ;  
Churchmen damn themselves to see  
God's sweet love in burning coals.

The rich are damned beyond all cure,  
To taunt, and starve, and trample  
on  
The weak and wretched ; and the  
poor

Damn their broken hearts to endure  
Stripe on stripe, with groan on  
groan

Sometimes the poor are damned  
indeed  
To take,—not means for being  
blest,—

But Cobbett's snuff, revenge ; that  
weed

From which the worms that it doth  
feed

Squeeze less than they before  
possessed.

And some few, like we know who,  
Damned—but God alone knows  
why—

To believe their minds are given  
To make this ugly Hell a Heaven ;  
In which faith they live and die.

Thus, as in a town plague-stricken,  
Each man be he sound or no  
Must indifferently sicken ;  
As when day begins to thicken,  
None knows a pigeon \* from a  
crow,—

So good and bad, sane and mad,  
The oppressor and the oppressed ;  
Those who weep to see what others  
Smile to inflict upon their brothers ;  
Lovers, haters, worst and best ;

All are damned—they breathe an air,  
Thick, infected, joy-dispelling ;  
Each pursues what seems most fair,  
Mining like moles, through mind, and  
there

Scoop palace-caverns vast, where Care  
In throned state is ever dwelling.

## PART THE FOURTH

### SIN

Lo, Peter in Hell's Grosvenor Square,  
A footman in the Devil's service !  
And the misjudging world would  
swear

That every man in service there  
To virtue would prefer vice.

But Peter, though now damned, was  
not

What Peter was before damnation.  
Men oftentimes prepare a lot

<sup>1</sup> This libel on our national oath, and this accusation of all our countrymen of being in the daily practice of solemnly asseverating the most enormous falsehood, I fear deserves the notice of a more active Attorney-General than that here alluded to,

Which ere it finds them, is not what  
Suits with their genuine station.

All things that Peter saw and felt  
Had a peculiar aspect to him ;  
And when they came within the belt  
Of his own nature, seemed to melt,  
Like cloud to cloud, into him.

And so the outward world uniting  
To that within him, he became  
Considerably uninviting  
To those, who meditation slighting,  
Were moulded in a different frame.

And he scorned them, and they  
scorned him :

And he scorned all they did ; and  
t ey

Did all that men of their own trim  
Are wont to do to please their whim,  
Drinking, lying, swearing, play.

Such were his fellow-servants ; thus  
His virtue, like our own, was built  
Too much on that indignant fuss  
Hypocrite Pride stirs up in us  
To bully out another's guilt.

He had a mind which was somehow  
At once circumference and centre  
Of all he might or feel or know ;  
Nothing went ever out, although  
Something did ever enter.

He had as much imagination  
As a pint-pot ;—he never could  
Fancy another situation,  
From which to dart his contempla-  
tion,

Than that wherein he stood.

Yet his was individual mind,  
And new created all he saw  
In a new manner, and refined  
Those new creations, and combined  
Them, by a master-spirit's law.

Thus—though unimaginative—  
An apprehension clear, intense,  
Of his mind's work, had made alive  
The things it wrought on ; I believe  
Wakening a sort of thought in sense.

But from the first 'twas Peter's drift  
To be a kind of moral eunuch,  
He touched the hem of Nature's shift,  
Felt faint—and never dared uplift  
The closest, all-concealing tunic.

She laughed the while, with an arch  
smile,

And kissed him with a sister's kiss,  
And said—" My best Diogenes,  
I love you well—but, if you please,  
Tempt not again my deepest bliss.

" 'Tis you are cold—for I, not coy,  
Yield love for love, frank, warm and  
true ;

And Burns, a Scottish peasant boy—  
His errors prove it—knew my joy  
More, learned friend, than you.

" *' Bocca bacciata non perde ventura  
Anzi rinnuova come fa la luna '* :—

So thought Boccaccio, whose sweet  
words might cure a

Male prude, like you, from what you  
now endure, a

Low-tide in soul, like a stagnant  
laguna."

Then Peter rubbed his eyes severe,  
And smoothed his spacious fore-  
head down

With his broad palm ;—'twixt love  
and fear,

He looked, as he no doubt felt, queer,  
And in his dream sate down.

The Devil was no uncommon crea-  
ture ;

A leaden-witted thief—just hud-  
dled

Out of the dross and scum of Nature ;  
A toad-like lump of limb and feature,  
With mind, and heart, and fancy  
muddled.

He was that heavy, dull, cold thing,  
The spirit of evil well may be :  
A drone too base to have a sting ;  
Who gluts, and grimes his lazy wing,  
And calls lust, luxury.

Now he was quite the kind of wight  
Round whom collect, at a fixed era,  
Venison, turtle, hock, and claret,—  
Good cheer—and those who come to  
share it—

And best East Indian madeira !

It was his fancy to invite  
Men of science, wit, and learning,  
Who came to lend each other light ;  
He proudly thought that his gold's  
might

Had set those spirits burning.

And men of learping, science, wit,  
Considered him as you and I  
Think of some rotten tree, and sit  
Lounging and dining under it,  
Exposed to the wide sky.

And all the while, with loose fat smile,  
The willing wretch sat winking  
there,  
Believing 'twas his power that made  
That jovial scene—and that all paid  
Homage to his unnoticed chair.

Though to be sure this place was Hell;  
He was the Devil—and all they—  
What though the claret circled well,  
And wit, like ocean, rose and fell?—  
Were damned eternally.

PART THE FIFTH

GRACE

AMONG the guests who often stayed  
Till the Devil's *petits-soupers*,  
A man there came, fair as a maid,  
And Peter noted what he said,  
Standing behind his master's chair.

He was a mighty poet—and  
A subtle-souled psychologist;  
All things he seemed to understand,  
Of old or new—of sea or land—  
But his own mind—which was a  
mist.

This was a man who might have  
turned  
Hell into Heaven—and so in glad-  
ness  
A Heaven unto himself have earned;  
But he in shadows undiscerned  
Trusted,—and damned himself to  
madness.

He spoke of poetry, and how  
"Divine it was—a light—a love—  
A spirit which like wind doth blow  
As it listeth, to and fro:  
A dew rained down from God  
above.

"A power which comes and goes like  
dream,  
And which none can ever trace—  
Heaven's light on earth—Truth's  
brightest beam."

S. P.

And when he ceased there lay the  
gleam  
Of those words upon his face.

Now Peter, when he heard such talk,  
Would, heedless of a broken pate,  
Stand like a man asleep, or baulk  
Some wishing guest of knife or fork,  
Or drop and break his master's  
plac.

At night he oft would start and wake  
Like a lover, and began  
In a wild measure songs to make  
On moor, and glen, and rocky lake,  
And on the heart of man,

And on the universal sky—  
And the wide earth's bosom green,  
And the sweet, strange mystery  
Of what beyond these things may lie,  
And yet remain unseen.

For in his thought he visited  
The spots in which, ere dead and  
damned,  
He his wayward life had led;  
Yet knew not whence the thoughts  
were fed,  
Which thus his fancy crammed.

And these obscure remembrances  
Stirred such harmony in Peter,  
That whensoever he should please,  
He could speak of rocks and trees  
In poetic metre.

For though it was without a sense  
Of memory, yet he remembered  
well  
Many a ditch and quickset fence;  
Of lakes he had intelligence,  
He knew something of heath and  
fell.

He had also dim recollections  
Of pedlars tramping on their  
rounds;  
Milkpans and pails; and odd collec-  
tions  
Of saws, and proverbs; and reflec-  
tions  
Old parsons make in burying-  
grounds.

Eut Peter's verse was clear, and  
came  
Announcing from the frozen hearth  
Of a cold age, that none might tame

A A



The soul of that diviner flame  
It augured to the Earth.

Like gentle rains, on the dry plains,  
Making that green which late was  
grey,

Or like the sudden moon, that stains  
Some gloomy chamber's window  
panes

With a broad light like day.

For language was in Peter's hand,  
Like clay, while he was yet a potter;  
And he made songs for all the land,  
Sweet both to feel and understand,  
As pipkins late to mountain Cotter.

And Mr. —, the bookseller,  
Gave twenty pounds for some;—  
then scorning  
A footman's yellow coat to wear,  
Peter, too proud of heart, I fear,  
Instantly gave the Devil warning.

Whereat the Devil took offence,  
And swore in his soul a great oath  
then,  
"That for his damned impertinence,  
He'd bring him to a proper sense  
Of what was due to gentlemen!"—

## PART THE SIXTH

### DAMNATION

"O THAT mine enemy had written  
A book!"—cried Job, a fearful  
curse;  
If to the Arab, as the Briton,  
'Twas galling to be critic-bitten—  
The Devil to Peter wished no worse.

When Peter's next new book found  
vent,  
The Devil to all the first Reviews  
A copy of it slyly sent,  
With five-pound note as compliment,  
And this short notice—"Pray  
abuse."

Then *versatim*, month and quarter,  
Appeared such mad tirades.—One  
said—

"Peter seduced Mrs. Foy's daughter,  
Then drowned the mother in Ulls-  
water,  
The last thing as he went to bed."

Another—"Let him shave his head!  
Where's Dr. Willis?—Or is he jok-  
ing?"

What does the rascal mean or hope,  
No longer imitating Pope,  
In that barbarian Shakspeare pok-  
ing?"

One more, "Is incest not enough?  
And must there be adultery too?  
Grace after meat? Miscreant and  
Liar!

Thief! Blackguard! Scoundrel!  
Fool! Hell fire  
Is twenty times too good for you.

"By that last book of yours we think  
You've double-damned yourself to  
scorn;  
We warned you whilst yet on the  
brink  
You stood. From your black name  
will shrink  
The babe that is unborn."

All these Reviews the Devil made  
Up in a parcel, which he had  
Safely to Peter's house conveyed.  
For carriage, tenpence Peter paid—  
Untied them—read them—went  
half mad.

"What!" cried he, "this is my re-  
ward  
For nights of thought, and days of  
toil?"

Do poets, but to be abhorred  
By men of whom they never heard,  
Consume their spirits' oil?

"What have I done to them?—and  
who  
Is Mrs. Foy? 'Tis very cruel  
To speak of me and Emma so!  
Adultery! God defend me! Oh!  
I've half a mind to fight a duel.

"Or," cried he, a grave look collect-  
ing,

"Is it my genius, like the moon,  
Sets those who stand her face inspect-  
ing,

That face within their brain reflect-  
ing,  
Like a crazed bell-chime, out of  
tune?"

For Peter did not know the town,  
But thought, as country readers do,  
For half-a-guinea or a crown,  
He bought oblivion or renown  
From God's own voice<sup>1</sup> in a review.

All Peter did on this occasion  
Was, writing some sad stuff in prose.  
It is a dangerous invasion  
When poets criticise ; their station  
Is to delight, not pose.

The Devil then sent to Leipsic fair,  
For Born's translation of Kant's  
book ;  
A world of words, tail foremost, where  
Right — wrong — false — true — and  
foul — and fair,  
As in a lottery-wheel are shook.

Five thousand crammed octavo pages  
Of German psychologies,—he  
Who his *furor verborum* assuages  
Thereon, deserves just seven months'  
wages  
More than will e'er be due to me.

I looked on them nine several days,  
And then I saw that they were bad ;  
A friend, too, spoke in their dis-  
praise,—  
He never read them ;—with amaze  
I found Sir William Drummond  
had.

When the book came, the Devil sent  
It to P. Verbovale,<sup>2</sup> Esquire,  
With a brief note of compliment,  
By that night's Carlisle mail. It  
went,  
And set his soul on fire.

Fire, which *ex luce præbens fumum*,  
Made him beyond the bottom see  
Of truth's clear well—when I and  
you, Ma'am,

Go, as we shall do, *subtler humum*,  
We may know more than he.

Now Peter ran to seed in soul  
Into a walking paradox ;  
For he was neither part nor whole,  
Nor good, nor bad—nor knave nor  
fool,  
—Among the woods and rocks.

Furious he rode, where late he ran,  
Lashing and spurring his tam:  
hobby ;  
Turned to a formal puritan,  
A solemn and unsexual man,—  
He half believed *White Obi*.

This steed in vision he would ride,  
High trotting over nine-inch  
bridges,  
With Flibbertigibbet, imp of pride,  
Mocking and mowing by his side—  
A mad-brained goblin for a guide—  
Over corn-fields, gates, and hedges.

After these ghastly rides, he came  
Home to his heart, and found  
from thence  
Much stolen of its accustomed flame ;  
His thoughts grew weak, drowsy, and  
lame  
Of their intelligence.

To Peter's view, all seemed one hue ;  
He was no Whig, he was no Tory ;  
No Deist and no Christian he ;—  
He got so subtle, that to be  
Nothing, was all his glory.

One single point in his belief  
From his organization sprung,  
The heart-enrooted faith, the chief  
Ear in his doctrines' blighted sheaf,  
That " happiness is wrong ; "

So thought Calvin and Dominic ;  
So think their fierce successors, who  
Even now would neither stint nor  
stick  
Our flesh from off our bones to pick,  
If they might " do their do."

His morals thus were undermined.—  
The old Peter—the hard, old Potter  
Was born anew within his mind ;

<sup>1</sup> *Vox populi vox Dei*. As Mr. Godwin truly observes of a more famous saying, of some merit as a popular maxim, but totally destitute of philosophical accuracy.

<sup>2</sup> Quasi, *Qui valet verba* :—i. e., all the words which have been, are, or may be expended by, for, against, with, or on him. A sufficient proof of the utility of this history. Peter's progenitor who selected this name seems to have possessed a pure anticipated cognition of the nature and modesty of this ornament of his posterity.

He grew dull, harsh, sly, unrefined,  
As when he tramped beside the  
Otter.<sup>1</sup>

In the death hues of agony  
Lambently flashing from a fish,  
Now Peter felt amused to see  
Shades like a rainbow's rise and flee,  
Mixed with a certain hungry wish.<sup>2</sup>

So in his Country's dying face  
He looked—and lovely as she lay,  
Seeking in vain his iast embrace,  
Wailing her own abandoned case,  
With hardened sneer he turned  
away :

And coolly to his own soul said ;—  
“ Do you not think that we might  
make  
A poem on her when she's dead ?  
Or, no—a thought is in my head—  
Her shroud for a new sheet I'll take.

“ My wife wants one.—Let who will  
bury  
This mangled corpse ! And I and  
you,  
My dearest soul, will then make merry,  
As the Prince Regent did with  
Sherry,—  
Ay—and at last desert me too.”

And so his Soul would not be gay,  
But moaned within him ; like a  
fawn  
Moaning within a cave, it lay  
Wounded and wasting, day by day,  
Till all its life of life was gone.

<sup>1</sup> A famous river in the new Atlantis of the  
Dynastophylic Pantisocratists.

<sup>2</sup> See the description of the beautiful colours  
produced during the agonizing death of a  
number of trout, in the fourth part of a long  
poem in blank verse, published within a few  
years. That poem contains curious evidence  
of the gradual hardening of a strong but circum-  
scribed sensibility, of the perversion of a pen-  
etrating but panic-stricken understanding. The  
author might have derived a lesson which he had  
probably forgotten from these sweet and sublime  
verses.

This lesson, Shepherd, let us two divide,  
Taught both by what she \* shows and what con-  
ceals,

Never to blend our pleasure or our pride  
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels.

\* Nature,

As troubled skies stain waters clear,  
The storm in Peter's heart and  
mind  
Now made his verses dark and queer :  
They were the ghosts of what they  
were,  
Shaking dim grave-clothes in the  
wind.

For he now raved enormous folly,  
Of Baptisms, Sunday-schools, and  
Graves,  
'Twould make George Colman melan-  
choly,  
To have heard him, like a male Molly,  
Chaunting those stupid staves.

Yet the Reviews, who heaped abuse  
On Peter while he wrote for free-  
dom,  
So soon as in his song they spy  
The folly which soothes tyranny,  
Praise him, for those who feed 'em.

“ He was a man, too great to scan ;—  
A planet lost in truth's keen rays —  
His virtue, awful and prodigious ;—  
He was the most sublime, religious,  
Pure-minded Poet of these days.”

As soon as he read that, cried Peter,  
“ Eureka ! I have found the way  
To make a better thing of metre  
Than e'er was made by living crea-  
ture  
Up to this blessed day.”

Then Peter wrote odes to the Devil —  
In one of which he meekly said :  
“ May Carnage and Slaughter,  
Thy niece and thy daughter,  
May Rapine and Famine,  
Thy gorge ever cramming,  
Glut thee with living and dead !

“ May death and damnation,  
And consternation,  
Flit up from hell with pure intent !  
Slash them at Manchester,  
Glasgow, Leeds, and Chester ;  
Drench all with blood from Avon to  
Trent.

“ Let thy bodyguard yeomen  
Hew down babes and women,

And laugh with bold triumph till  
Heaven be rent,  
When Moloch in Jewry,  
Munched children with fury,  
It was thou, Devil, dining with pure  
intent."<sup>1</sup>

PART THE SEVENTH

•DOUBLE DAMNATION

THE Devil now knew his proper cue.—  
Soon as he read the ode, he drove  
To his friend Lord Mac Murder-  
chouse's,  
A man of interest in both Houses,  
And said :—" For money or for  
love,

" Pray find some cure or sinecure ;  
To feed from the superfluous taxes,  
A friend of ours—a poet—fewer  
Have fluttered tamer to the lure  
Than he." His lordship stands  
and racks his

Stupid brains, while one might count  
As many beads as he had bor-  
oughs,—  
At length replies ; from his mean  
front,  
Like one who rubs out an account,  
Smoothing away the unmeaning  
furrows :

" It happens fortunately, dear Sir,  
I can. I hope I need require  
No pledge from you, that he will stir  
In our affairs ;—like Oliver,  
That he'll be worthy of his hire."

These words exchanged, the news  
sent off

To Peter, home the Devil hied,—  
Took to his bed ; he had no cough,

<sup>1</sup> It is curious to observe how often extremes meet. Cobbett and Peter use the same language for a different purpose : Peter is indeed a sort of metrical Cobbett. Cobbett is, however, more mischievous than Peter, because he pollutes a holy and now unconquerable cause with the principles of legitimate murder ; whilst the other only makes a bad one ridiculous and odious.

If either Peter or Cobbett should see this note, each will feel more indignation at being compared to the other than at any censure implied in the moral perversion laid to their charge.

No doctor, — meat and drink  
enough,—  
Yet that same night he died.

The Devil's corpse was leaded down ;  
His decent heirs enjoyed his pelf,  
Mourning-coaches, many a one,  
Followed his hearse along the town :—  
Where was the Devil himself ?

When Peter heard of his promotion,  
His eyes grew like two stars for bliss,  
There was a bow of sleek devotion,  
Engendering in his back ; each mo-  
tion  
Seemed a Lord's shoe to kiss.

He hired a house, bought plate, and  
made  
A genteel drive up to his door,  
With sifted gravel neatly laid,—  
As if defying all who said,  
Peter was ever poor.

But a disease soon struck into  
The very life and soul of Peter—  
He walked about—slept—had the hue  
Of health upon his cheeks—and few  
Dug better—none a heartier eater.

And yet a strange and horrid curse  
Clung upon Peter, night and day,  
Month after month the thing grew  
worse,  
And deadlier than in this my verse,  
I can find strength to say.

Peter was dull—he was at first  
Dull—O, so dull—so very dull !  
Whether he talked, wrote, or re-  
hearsed—

Still with this dulness was he cursed—  
Dull—beyond all conception—dull.

No one could read his books—no mor-  
tal,

But a few natural friends, would  
hear him ;

The parson came not near his portal ;  
His state was like that of the immor-  
tal

Described by Swift—no man could  
bear him.

His sister, wife, and children yawned,  
With a long, slow, and drear ennui,

All human patience far beyond ;  
 Their hopes of Heaven each would  
     have pawned,  
 Anywhere else to be.

But in his verse, and in his prose,  
 The essence of his dulness was  
 Concentred and compressed so close,  
 'Twould have made Guatimozin doze  
 On his red gridiron of brass.

A printer's boy, folding those pages,  
 Fell slumbrously upon one side ;  
 Like those famed Seven who slept  
     three ages.  
 To wakeful frenzy's vigil rages,  
 As opiates, were the same applied.

Even the Reviewers who were hired  
 To do the work of his reviewing,  
 With adamantine nerves, grew  
     tired ;—  
 Gaping and torpid they retired,  
 To dream of what they should be  
     doing.

And worse and worse, the drowsy  
     curse  
 Yawned in him till it grew a pest—  
 A wide contagious atmosphere,  
 Creeping like cold through all things  
     near ;  
 A power to infect and to infest.

His servant-maids and dogs grew dull ;  
 His kitten, late a sportive elf ;  
 The woods and lakes, so beautiful,  
 Of dim stupidity were full,  
 All grew dull as Peter's self.

The earth under his feet—the springs,  
 Which lived within it a quick life,  
 The air, the winds of many wings,  
 That fan it with new murmurings,  
 Were dead to their harmonious  
     strife.

The birds and beasts within the wood,  
 The insects, and each creeping  
     thing,  
 Were now a silent multitude ;  
 Love's work was left unwrought—no  
     brood  
 Near Peter's house took wing.

And every neighbouring cottager  
 Stupidly yawned upon the other :  
 No jackass brayed ; no little cur  
 Cocked up his ears ;—no man would  
     stir

To save a dying mother.

Yet all from that charmed district  
     went

But some half-idiot and half-knave,  
 Who rather than pay any rent,  
 Would live with marvellous content,  
 Over his father's grave.

No bailiff dared within that space,  
 For fear of the dull charm, to enter ;  
 A man would bear upon his face,  
 For fifteen months, in any case,  
 The yawn of such a venture,

Seven miles above—below—around—  
 This pest of dulness holds its sway ;  
 A ghastly life without a sound ;  
 To Peter's soul the spell is bound—  
 How should it ever pass away ?

### LINES

WRITTEN DURING THE CASTLEREAGH  
 ADMINISTRATION

CORPSES are cold in the tomb,  
 Stones on the pavement are dumb,  
 Abortions are dead in the womb,  
 And their mothers look pale—like the  
     white shore  
 Of Albion, free no more.

Her sons are as stones in the way—  
 They are masses of senseless clay—  
 They are trodden and move not  
     away,—  
 The abortion, with which she tra-  
     vaileth,  
 Is Liberty—smitten to death.

Then trample and dance, thou Op-  
     pressor,  
 For thy Victim is no redressor,  
 Thou art sole lord and possessor  
 Of her corpses, and clods, and abor-  
     tions—they pave  
 Thy path to the grave.

Hearst thou the festival din,  
 Of death, and destruction, and sin,

And wealth, crying "Havoc!"  
within?  
'Tis the Bacchanal triumph, which  
makes truth dumb,  
Thine Epithalamium.

Ay, marry thy ghastly wife!  
Let fear, and disquiet, and strife  
Spread thy couch in the chamber of  
life,  
Marry Ruin, thou tyrant! and God  
be thy guide  
To the bed of the bride.

## SONG

## TO THE MEN OF ENGLAND

MEN of England, wherefore plough  
For the lords who lay ye low?  
Wherefore weave with toil and care,  
The rich robes your tyrants wear?

Wherefore feed, and clothe, and save,  
From the cradle to the grave,  
Those ungrateful drones who would  
Drain your sweat—nay, drink your  
blood!

Wherefore, Bees of England, forge  
Many a weapon, chain, and scourge,  
That these stingless drones may spoil  
The forced produce of your toil?

Have ye leisure, comfort, calm,  
Shelter, food, love's gentle balm?  
Or what is it ye buy so dear  
With your pain and with your fear?

The seed ye sow another reaps;  
The wealth ye find, another keeps;  
The robes ye weave, another wears;  
The arms ye forge, another bears.

Sow seed,—but let no tyrant reap;  
Find wealth,—let no impostor heap;  
Weave robes,—let not the idle wear;  
Forge arms,—in your defence to bear.

Shrink to your cellars, holes, and cells;  
In halls ye deck, another dwells.  
Why shake the chains ye wrought?  
Ye see

The steel ye tempered glance on ye.

With plough and spade, and hoe and  
loom,  
Trace your grave, and build your  
tomb,

And weave your winding-sheet, till  
fair  
England be your sepulchre.

## ENGLAND IN 1819

AN old, mad, blind, despised, and  
dying king,—  
Princes, the dregs of their dull race,  
who flow  
Through public scorn—mud from a  
muddy spring,—  
Rulers, who neither see, nor feel, nor  
know,  
But leech-like to their fainting coun-  
try cling,  
Till they drop, blind in blood, without  
a blow,—  
A people starved and stabbed in the  
untilled field,  
An army, which liberticide and prey  
Makes as a two-edged sword to all  
who wield,  
Golden and sanguine laws which  
tempt and slay,—  
Religion Christless, Godless—a book  
sealed;  
A Senate—Time's worst statute un-  
repealed,—  
Are graves, from which a glorious  
Phantom may  
Burst, to illumine our tempestuous  
day.

## SIMILES

FOR TWO POLITICAL CHARACTERS OF  
1819

As from an ancestral oak  
Two empty ravens sound their  
clarion,  
Yell by yell, and croak by croak,  
When they scent the noonday smoke  
Of fresh human carrion:—  
As two gibbering night-birds flit,  
From their bowers of deadly hue,  
Through the night to frighten it,  
When the morn is in a fit,  
And the stars are none or few:—  
As a shark and dogfish wait  
Under an Atlantic isle,  
For the negro-ship whose freight  
Is the theme of their debate,  
Wrinkling their red gills the while—

Are ye, two vultures sick for battle,  
 Two scorpions under one wet stone;  
 Two bloodless wolves whose dry  
 throats rattle,  
 Two crows perched on the murrained  
 cattle,  
 Two vipers tangled into one.

### GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

God prosper, speed, and save,  
 God raise from England's grave,  
 Her murdered Queen!  
 Pave with swift victory  
 The steps of Liberty,  
 Whom Britons own to be  
 Immortal Queen!

See, she comes throned on high  
 On swift Eternity!

God save the Queen!  
 Millions on millions wait,  
 Firm, rapid, and elate,  
 On her majestic state—  
 God save the Queen!

She is Thine own pure soul  
 Moulding the mighty whole.  
 God save the Queen!  
 She is Thine own deep love  
 Rained down from heaven above,  
 Wherever she rest or move,  
 God save our Queen!

'Wilder her enemies  
 In their own dark disguise!  
 God save our Queen!  
 All earthly things that dare  
 Her sacred name to bear,  
 Strip them, as kings are, bare :  
 God save the Queen!

Be her eternal throne  
 Built in our hearts alone—  
 God save the Queen!  
 Let the oppressor hold  
 Canopied seats of gold;  
 She sits enthroned of old  
 O'er our hearts Queen.

Lips touched by seraphim  
 Breathe out the choral hymn  
 "God save the Queen!"  
 Sweet as if angels sang,  
 Loud as that trumpet's clang  
 Wakening the world's dead gang,—  
 God save the Queen!

### AN ODE

#### TO THE ASSERTERS OF LIBERTY

ARISE, arise, arise!

There is blood on the earth that de-  
 nies ye bread

Be your wounds like eyes  
 To weep for the dead, the dead, the  
 dead.

What other grief were it just to pay?  
 Your sons, your wives, your brethren,  
 were they;  
 Who said they were slain on the battle  
 day?

Awaken, awaken, awaken!

The slave and the tyrant are twin-  
 born foes;

Be the cold chains shaken

To the dust, where your kindred  
 repose, repose:

Their bones in the grave will start  
 and move,

When they hear the voices of those  
 they love,

Most loud in the holy combat above.

Wave, wave high the banner!

When Freedom is riding to con-  
 quest by:

Though the slaves that fan her

Be famine and toil, giving sigh for  
 sigh,

And ye who attend her imperial car,  
 Lift not your hands in the banded  
 war,

But in her defence whose children ye  
 are.

Glory, glory, glory,

To those who have greatly suffered  
 and done!

Never name in story

Was greater than that which ye  
 shall have won.

Conquerors have conquered their foes  
 alone,

Whose revenge, pride, and power,  
 they have overthrown;

Ride ye, more victorious, over your  
 own.

Bind, bind every brow

With crowns of violet, ivy and  
 pine:

Hide the blood-stains now

With hues which sweet Nature has  
 made divine,

Green strength, azure hope, and eternity.  
But let not the pansy among them be;  
Ye were injured, and that means  
memory.

ODE TO HEAVEN

CHORUS OF SPIRITS

FIRST SPIRIT.

PALACE-ROOF of cloudless nights !  
Paradise of golden lights !  
Deep, immeasurable, vast,  
Which art now, and which wert then !  
Of the present and the past,  
Of the eternal where and when,  
Presence-chamber, temple, home,  
Ever-canopying dome,  
Of acts and ages yet to come !

Glorious shapes have life in thee,  
Earth, and all earth's company ;  
Living globes which ever throng  
Thy deep chasms and wildernesses ;  
And green worlds that glide along ;  
And swift stars with flashing tresses ;  
And icy moons most cold and  
bright,  
And mighty suns beyond the night,  
Atoms of intensest light.

Even thy name is as a god,  
Heaven ! for thou art the abode  
Of that power which is the glass  
Wherein man his nature sees.  
Generations as they pass  
Worship thee with bended knees.  
Their unremaining gods and they  
Like a river roll away ;  
Thou remainest such alway.

SECOND SPIRIT.

Thou art but the mind's first chamber,  
Round which its young fancies clam-  
ber,

Like weak insects in a cave,  
Lighted up by stalactites ;  
But the portal of the grave,  
Where a world of new delights  
Will make thy best glories seem  
But a dim and noonday gleam  
From the shadow of a dream !

THIRD SPIRIT.

Peace ! the abyss is wreathed with  
scorn

At your presumption, atom-born !  
What is heaven ? and what are ye  
Who its brief expanse inherit ?  
What are suns and spheres which  
flee

With the instinct of that spirit  
Of which ye are but a part ?  
Drops which Nature's mighty heart  
Drives through thinnest veins.  
Depart !

What is heaven ? a globe of dew,  
Filling in the morning new  
Some eyed flower, whose young  
leaves waken  
On an unimagined world :  
Constellated suns unshaken,  
Orbits measureless, are furled  
In that frail and fading sphere,  
With ten millions gathered there,  
To tremble, gleam, and disappear.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND <sup>1</sup>

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of  
Autumn's being,  
Thou, from whose unseen presence  
the leaves dead  
Are driven, like ghosts from an en-  
chanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and  
hectic red,  
Pestilence-stricken multitudes : O  
thou,  
Who chariotest to their dark wintry  
bed

The winged seeds, where they lie cold  
and low,  
Each like a corpse within its grave,  
until

<sup>1</sup> This poem was conceived and chiefly written in a wood that skirts the Arno, near Florence, and on a day when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapours which pour down the autumnal rains. They began, as I foresaw, at sunset, with a violent tempest of hail and rain, attended by that magnificent thunder and lightning peculiar to the Cisalpine regions.

The phenomenon alluded to at the conclusion of the third stanza is well known to naturalists. The vegetation at the bottom of the sea, of rivers, and of lakes, sympathizes with that of the land in the change of seasons, and is consequently influenced by the winds which announce it.



Thine azure sister of the spring shall  
blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth,  
and fill

(Driving sweet birds like flocks to  
feed in air)

With living hues and odours plain  
and hill :

Wild Spirit, which art moving every-  
where ;

Destroyer and preserver ; hear, oh  
hear !

## II

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the  
steep sky's commotion,

Loose clouds like earth's decaying  
leaves are shed,

Shook from the tangled boughs of  
Heaven and Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning : there  
are spread

On the blue surface of thine airy surge,  
Like the bright hair uplifted from the  
head

Of some fierce Menad, even from the  
dim verge

Of the horizon to the zenith's height,  
The locks of the approaching storm  
Thou dirge

'Of the dying year, to which this clos-  
ing night

Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,  
Vaulted with all thy congregated  
might

Of vapours, from whose solid atmo-  
sphere

Black rain, and fire, and hail, will  
burst : Oh hear !

## III

Thou who didst waken from his sum-  
mer dreams

The blue Mediterranean, where he lay  
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline  
streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiae's bay,  
And saw in sleep old palaces and  
towers

Quivering within the wave's intenser  
day,

All overgrown with azure moss and  
flowers

So sweet, the sense, faints picturing  
them ! Thou

For whose path the Atlantic's level  
powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while  
far below

The sea-blooms and the oozy woods  
which wear

The sapless foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow grey  
with fear,

And tremble and despoil themselves :  
Oh hear !

## IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest  
bear ;

If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee ;  
A wave to pant beneath thy power,  
and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less  
free

Than thou, O uncontrollable ! If  
even

I were as in my boyhood, and could be  
The comrade of thy wanderings over  
heaven,

As then, when to outstrip the skyey  
speed

Scarce seemed a vision, I would ne'er  
have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore  
need.

Oh ! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud !  
I fall upon the thorns of life ! I bleed !

A heavy weight of hours has chained  
and bowed

One too like thee : tameless, and  
swift, and proud.

## V

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest  
is :

What if my leaves are falling like its  
own !

The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep autumnal  
tone,

Sweet though in sadness. Be thou,  
spirit fierce

My spirit ! Be thou me, impetuous  
one !

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe

Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth ;

And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth

Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind !

Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy ! O wind,  
Winter comes, can Spring be far behind ?

### AN EXHORTATION

CHAMELEONS feed on light and air :

Poets' food is love and fame :

If in this wide world of care

Poets could but find the same  
With as little toil as they,

Would they ever change their hue

As the light chameleons do,

Suiting it to every ray

Twenty times a day ?

Poets are on this cold earth,

As chameleons might be,

Hidden from their early birth

In a cave beneath the sea ;

Where light is, chameleons change !

Where love is not, poets do

Fame is love disguised : if few

Find either, never think it strange

That poets range.

Yet dare not stain with wealth or power

A poet's free and heavenly mind :

If bright chameleons should devour

Any food but beams and wind,

They would grow as earthly soon

As their brother lizards are.

Children of a sunnier star,

Spirits from beyond the moon,

Oh, refuse the boon !

### LINES WRITTEN FOR MISS SOPHIA STACEY

Thou art fair, and few are fairer

Of the nymphs of earth or ocean.

They are robes that fit the wearer -

Those soft limbs of thine, whose motion

Ever falls and shifts and glances,  
As the life within them dances.

Thy deep eyes, a double planet,

Gaze the wisest into madness

With soft clear fire. The winds that fan it

Are those thoughts of gentle gladness

Which, like zephyrs on the billow,

Make thy gentle soul their pillow.

If whatever face thou paintest

In those eyes grows pale with pleasure,

If the fainting soul is faintest

When it hears thy harp's wild measure,

Wonder not that, when thou speakest,  
Of the weak my heart is weakest.

As dew beneath the wind of morning,

As the sea which whirlwinds waken,

As the birds at thunder's warning,

As aught mute but deeply shaken,

As one who feels an unseen spirit,

Is my heart when thine is near it.

VIA VAL FONDA, FLORENCE.

ON

### THE "MEDUSA" OF LEONARDO DA VINCI

IN THE FLORENTINE GALLERY

It lieth, gazing on the midnight sky,

Upon the cloudy mountain peak  
supine,

Below, far lands are seen tremblingly ;

Its horror and its beauty are divine.

Upon its lips and eyelids seems to lie

Loveliness like a shadow, from  
which shine,

Fiery and lurid, struggling underneath,

The agonies of anguish and of death.

Yet it is less the horror than the grace

Which turns the gazer's spirit into  
stone

Whereon the lineaments of that dead  
face

Are graven, till the characters be  
grown

Into itself, and thought no more can  
trace ;

'Tis the melodious hues of beauty  
thrown

Athwart the darkness and the glare  
of pain,

Which humanised and harmonize the  
strain.

And from its head as from one body  
grow,

As [ ] grass out of a watery  
rock,

Hairs which are vipers, and they curl  
and flow,

And their long tangles in each other  
lock,

And with unending involutions show  
Their mailed radiance, as it were to  
mock

The torture and the death within,  
and saw

The solid air with many a ragged jaw.

And from a stone beside, a poisonous  
eft\*

Peeps idly into these Gorgonian  
eyes ;

Whilst in the air a ghastly bat, bereft  
Of sense, has flitted with a mad sur-  
prise

Out of the cave this hideous light hath  
cleft,

And he comes hastening like a  
moth that hies

After a taper ; and the midnight sky  
Flares, a light more dread than ob-  
scurity.

'Tis the tempestuous loveliness of  
terror ;

For from the serpents gleams a  
brazen glare

Kindled by that inextricable error,  
Which makes a thrilling vapour of  
the air

Become a [ ] and ever-shift-  
ing mirror

Of all the beauty and the terror  
there—

A woman's countenance, with serpen  
locks,

Gazing in death on heaven from those  
wet rocks.

FLORENCE, 1819.

### TO WILLIAM SHELLEY

(With what truth I may say—  
Roma ! Roma ! Roma !  
Non è più come era prima !)

My lost William, thou in whom  
Some bright spirit lived, and did

That decaying robe consume  
Which its lustre faintly hid,

Here its ashes find a tomb,  
But beneath this pyramid

Thou art not—if a thing divine  
Like thee can die, thy funeral shrine  
Is thy mother's grief and mine.

Where art thou, my gentle child ?

Let me think thy spirit feeds,  
With its life intense and mild,

The love of living leaves and weeds,  
Among these tombs and ruins wild ;—

Let me think that through low  
seeds

Of the sweet flowers and sunny grass,  
Into their hues and scents may pass,

A portion ———

June, 1819.

## POEMS WRITTEN IN 1820

## THE SENSITIVE PLANT

## PART I

A SENSITIVE Plant in a garden grew,  
And the young winds fed it with  
silver dew,  
And it opened its fan-like leaves to  
the light,  
And closed them beneath the kisses of  
night.

And the spring arose on the garden  
fair,  
And the Spirit of Love fell every-  
where ;  
And each flower and herb on Earth's  
dark breast  
Rose from the dreams of its wintry  
rest.

But none ever trembled and panted  
with bliss  
In the garden, the field, or the wilder-  
ness,  
Like a doe in the noon-tide with love's  
sweet want,  
As the companionless Sensitive Plant.

The snowdrop, and then the violet,  
Arose from the ground with warm  
rain wet,  
And their breath was mixed with  
fresh odour, sent  
From the turf, like the voice and the  
instrument.

Then the pied wind-flowers and the  
tulip fall,  
And narcissi, the fairest among them  
all,  
Who gaze on their eyes in the stream's  
recess,  
Till they die of their own dear loveli-  
ness.

And the Naiad-like lily of the vale,  
Whom youth makes so fair and pas-  
sion so pale,  
That the light of its tremulous bells  
is seen  
Through their pavilions of tender  
green ;

And the hyacinth purple, and white,  
and blue,  
Which flung from its bells a sweet peal  
anew  
Of music so delicate, soft, and intense,  
It was felt like an odour within the  
sense ;

And the rose like a nymph to the bath  
address,  
Which unveiled the depth of her  
glowing breast,  
Till, fold after fold, to the fainting air  
The soul of her beauty and love lay  
bare ;

And the wand-like lily, which lifted  
up,  
As a Menad, its moonlight-coloured  
cup,  
Till the fiery star, which is its eye,  
Gazed through the clear dew on the  
tender sky ;

And the jessamine faint, and the  
sweet tuberose,  
The sweetest flower for scent that  
blows ;  
And all rare blossoms from every  
clime

Grew in that garden in perfect prime.  
And on the stream whose inconstant  
bosom  
Was pranked, under boughs of em-  
bowering blossom,  
With golden and green light, slanting  
through

Their heaven of many a tangled hue,  
Broad water-lilies lay tremulously,  
And starry river-buds glimmered by,  
And around them the soft stream did  
glide and dance  
With a motion of sweet sound and  
radiance.

And the sinuous paths of lawn and of  
moss,  
Which led through the garden along  
and across,  
Some open at once to the sun and the  
breeze,

Some lost among bowers of blossoming trees,  
 Were all paved with daisies and delicate bells,  
 As fair as the fabulous asphodels,  
 And flowerets which drooping as day drooped too,  
 Fell into pavilions, white, purple, and blue,  
 To roof the glow-worm from the evening dew.  
 And from this undefiled Paradise  
 The flowers (as an infant's awakening eyes  
 Smile on its mother, whose singing sweet  
 Can first lull, and at last must awaken it),  
 When Heaven's blithe winds had unfolded them,  
 As mine-lamps enkindle a hidden gem,  
 Shone smiling to heaven, and every one  
 Shared joy in the light of the gentle sun ;  
 For each one was interpenetrated  
 With the light and the odour its neighbour shed,  
 Like young lovers whom youth and love make dear,  
 Wrapped and filled by their mutual atmosphere.  
 But the Sensitive Plant, which could give small fruit  
 Of the love which it felt from the leaf to the root,  
 Received more than all, it loved more than ever,  
 Where none wanted but it, could belong to the giver--  
 For the Sensitive Plant has no bright flower ;  
 Radiance and odour are not its dower ;  
 It loves, even like Love, its deep heart is full,  
 It desires what it has not, the beautiful !  
 The light winds, which from unsustaining wings  
 Shed the music of many murmurings ;

The beams which dart from many a star  
 Of the flowers whose hues they bear afar ;  
 The plumed insects swift and free,  
 Like golden boats on a sunny sea,  
 Laden with light and odour, which pass  
 Over the gleam of the living grass ;  
 The unseen clouds of the dew, which lie  
 Like fire in the flowers till the sun rides high,  
 Then wander like spirits among the spheres,  
 Each cloud faint with the fragrance it bears ;  
 The quivering vapours of dim noon-tide,  
 Which, like a sea, o'er the warm earth glide,  
 In which every sound, and odour, and beam,  
 Move, as reeds in a single stream ;  
 Each and all like ministring angels were  
 For the Sensitive Plant sweet joy to bear,  
 Whilst the lagging hours of the day went by  
 Like windless clouds o'er a tender sky.  
 And when evening descended from heaven above,  
 And the earth was all rest, and the air was all love,  
 And delight, though less bright, was far more deep,  
 And the day's veil fell from the world of sleep,  
 And the beasts, and the birds, and the insects were drowned  
 In an ocean of dreams without a sound ;  
 Whose waves never mark, though they ever impress  
 The light sand which paves it, consciousness ;  
 (Only overhead the sweet nightingale  
 Ever sang more sweet as the day might fail,  
 And snatches of its Elysian chant  
 Were mixed with the dreams of the Sensitive Plant.)

The Sensitive Plant was the earliest  
Up-gathered into the bosom of rest ;  
A sweet child weary of its delight,  
The feeblest and yet the favourite,  
Cradled within the embrace of night.

## PART II

THERE was a power in this sweet  
place,

An Eve in this Eden ; a ruling grace  
Which to the flowers, did they waken  
or dream,

Was as God is to the starry scheme.

A Lady, the wonder of her kind,  
Whose form was upborne by a lovely  
mind,

Which, dilating, had moulded her  
mien and motion

Like a sea-flower unfolded beneath  
the ocean,

Tended the garden from morn to  
even :

And the meteors of that sublunar hea-  
ven,

Like the lamps of the air when night  
walks forth,

Laughed round her footsteps up from  
the Earth !

She had no companion of mortal race,  
But her tremulous breath and her  
flushing face

Told whilst the morn kissed the sleep  
from her eyes,

That her dreams were less slumber  
than Paradise :

As if some bright Spirit for her sweet  
sake.

Had deserted heaven while the stars  
were awake,

As if yet around her he lingering were,  
Though the veil of daylight concealed  
him from her.

Her step seemed to pity the grass it  
pressed :

You might hear, by the heaving of  
her breast,

That the coming and the going of the  
wind

Brought pleasure there and left pas-  
sion behind.

And wherever her airy footstep trod,  
Her trailing hair from the grassy soil

Erased its light vestige, with shadowy  
sweep,  
Like a sunny storm o'er the dark  
green deep.

I doubt not the flowers of that garden  
sweet

Rejoiced in the sound of her gentle  
feet ;

I doubt not they felt the spirit that  
came

From her glowing fingers through all  
their frame.

She sprinkled bright water from the  
stream

On those that were faint with the  
sunny beam ;

And out of the cups of the heavy  
flowers

She emptied the rain of the thunder  
showers.

She lifted their heads with her tender  
hands,

And sustained them with rods and  
osier bands ;

If the flowers had been her own in-  
fants, she

Could never have nursed them more  
tenderly.

And all killing insects and gnawing  
worms,

And things of obscene and unlovely  
forms,

She bore in a basket of Indian woof,  
Into the rough woods far aloof,

In a basket, of grasses and wild  
flowers full,

The freshest her gentle hands could  
full

For the poor banished insects, whos'  
intent,

Although they did ill, was innocent.

But the bee and the beamlike ephre-  
meris,

Whose path is the lightning's, and  
soft moths that kiss

The sweet lips of the flowers, and  
harm not, did she

Make her attendant angels be.

And many an antenatal tomb,

Where butterflies dream of the life  
to come,

She left clinging round the smooth  
 and dark  
 Edge of the odorous cedar bark.  
 'This fairest creature from earliest  
 spring  
 Thus moved through the garden  
 ministering  
 All the sweet season of summer tide,  
 And ere the first leaf looked brown  
 —she died !

## PART III

'THREE days the flowers of the garden  
 fair,  
 Like stars when the moon is awa-  
 kened, were,  
 Or the waves of the Baire, ere lumi-  
 nous  
 She floats up through the smoke of  
 Vesuvius.

And on the fourth, the Sensitive  
 Plant  
 Felt the sound of the funeral chant,  
 And the steps of the bearers, heavy  
 and slow,  
 And the sobs of the mourners, deep  
 and low ;

The weary sound and the heavy  
 breath,  
 And the silent motions of passing  
 death,  
 And the smell, cold, oppressive, and  
 dank,  
 Sent through the pores of the coffin  
 plank ;

The dark grass, and the flowers  
 among the grass,  
 Were bright with tears as the crowd  
 did pass ;  
 From their sighs the wind caught a  
 mournful tone,  
 And sate in the pines and gave groan  
 for groan.

The garden, once fair, became cold  
 and foul,  
 Like the corpse of her who had been  
 its soul :

Which at first was lovely as if in sleep,  
 Then slowly changed, till it grew a  
 heap  
 To make men tremble who never  
 weep.

Swift summer into the autumn flowed,  
 And frost in the mist of the morning  
 rode,  
 Though the noonday sun looked  
 clear and bright,  
 Mocking the spoil of the secret night.  
 The rose-leaves, like flakes of crimson  
 snow,  
 Paved the turf and the moss below.  
 The lilies were drooping, and white,  
 and wan,  
 Like the head and the skin of a dying  
 man,

And Indian plants, of scent and hue  
 The sweetest that ever were fed on  
 dew,  
 Leaf after leaf, day by day,  
 Were massed into the common clay.

And the leaves, brown, yellow, and  
 grey, and red,  
 And white with the whiteness of what  
 is dead,  
 Like troops of ghosts on the dry wind  
 passed ;  
 Their whistling noise made the birds  
 aghast.

And the gusty winds waked the  
 winged seeds  
 Out of their birthplace of ugly weeds,  
 Till they clung round many a sweet  
 flower's stem,  
 Which rotted into the earth with  
 them.

The water-blooms under the rivulet  
 Fell from the stalks on which they  
 were set ;  
 And the eddies drove them here and  
 there,  
 As the winds did those of the upper  
 air.

Then the rain came down, and the  
 broken stalks  
 Were bent and tangled across the  
 walks ;  
 And the leafless net-work of parasite  
 bowers  
 Massed into ruin, and all sweet  
 flowers.

Between the time of the wind and the  
 snow,  
 All loathliest weeds began to grow,

Whose coarse leaves were splashed  
with many a speck,  
Like the water-snake's belly and the  
toad's back.

And thistles, and nettles, and darnels  
rank,

And the dock, and henbane, and hem-  
lock dank,

Stretch'd out its long and hollow  
shank,

And stifled the air till the dead wind  
stank.

And plants, at whose names the verse  
feels loath,

Filled the place with a monstrous  
undergrowth,

Prickly, and pulposus, and blistering,  
and blue,

Livid, and starred with a lurid dew.

And agarics and fungi, with mildew  
and mould,

Started like mist from the wet ground  
cold ;

Pale, fleshy, as if the decaying dead  
With a spirit of growth had been ani-  
mated !

Spawn, weeds, and filth, a leprous  
scum,

Made the running rivulet thick and  
dumb,

And at its outlet, flags huge as stakes  
Dammed it up with roots knotted  
like water-snakes.

And hour by hour, when the air was  
still,

The vapours arose which have  
strength to kill :

At morn they were seen, at noon they  
were felt,

At night they were darkness no star  
could melt.

And unctuous meteors from spray to  
spray

Crept and flitted in broad noonday  
Unseen ; every branch on which they  
alit

By a venomous blight was burned and  
bit.

The Sensitive Plant, like one forbid,  
Wept, and the tears within each lid  
Of its folded leaves which together  
grew,

S.P.

Were changed to a blight of frozen  
glue.

For the leaves soon fell, and the  
branches soon

By the heavy axe of the blast were  
hewn ;

The sap shrank to the root through  
every pore,

As blood to a heart that will beat no  
more.

For Winter came : the wind was his  
whip ;

One choppy finger was on his lip :  
He had torn the cataracts from the  
hills,

And they clanked at his girdle like  
manacles ;

His breath was a chain which without  
a sound

The earth, and the air, and the water  
bound ;

He came, fiercely driven in his  
chariot-throne

By the tenfold blasts of the Arctic  
zone.

Then the weeds which were forms of  
living death,

Fled from the frost to the earth be-  
neath :

Their decay and sudden flight from  
frost

Was but like the vanishing of a ghost !

And under the roots of the Sensitive  
Plant

The moles and the dormice died for  
want :

The birds dropped stiff from the  
frozen air,

And were caught in the branches  
naked and bare.

First there came down a thawing rain,  
And its dull drops froze on the boughs  
again,

Then there steamed up a freezing dew  
Which to the drops of the thaw-rain  
grew ;

And a northern whirlwind, wandering  
about

Like a wolf that had smelt a dead  
child out,

Shook the boughs thus laden, and  
heavy and stiff,

B B



And snapped them off with his rigid  
griff,

When winter had gone and spring  
came back,

The Sensitive Plant was a leafless  
wreck ;

But the mandrakes, and toadstools,  
and docks, and darnels,

Rose like the dead from their ruined  
channels.

### CONCLUSION

WHETHER the Sensitive Plant, or that  
Which within its boughs like a spirit  
sat,

Ere its outward form had known  
decay,

Now felt this change, I cannot say.

Whether that lady's gentle mind,  
No longer with the form combined  
Which scattered love, as stars do  
light,

Found sadness, where it left delight,

I dare not guess ; but in this life  
Of error, ignorance and strife,  
Where nothing is, but all things seem,  
And we the shadows of the dream,

It is a modest creed, and yet  
Pleasant, if one considers it,  
To own that death itself must be,  
Like all the rest, a mockery.

That garden sweet, that lady fair,  
And all sweet shapes and odours  
there,

In truth have never passed away :  
'Tis we, 'tis ours, are changed ! not  
they.

For love, and beauty, and delight,  
There is no death nor change ; their  
might

Exceeds our organs, which endure.  
No light, being themselves obs ure.

### A VISION OF THE SEA

'Tis the terror of tempest. The rags  
of the sail

Are flickering in ribbons within the  
fierce gale :

From the stark night of vapours the  
dim rain is driven,

And when lightning is loosed like a  
deluge from heaven,

She sees the black trunks of the  
water-spouts spin,

And bend, as if heaven was ruining in,  
Which they seemed to sustain with  
their terrible mass

As if ocean had sunk from beneath  
them : they pass

To their graves in the deep with an  
earthquake of sound,

And the waves and the thunders,  
made silent around,

Leave the wind to its echo. The ves-  
sel, now tossed

Through the low trailing rack of the  
tempest, is lost

In the skirts of the thunder-cloud :  
now down the sweep

Of the wind-cloven wave to the chasm  
of the deep

It sinks, and the walls of the watery  
vale

Whose depths of dread calm are un-  
moved by the gale,

Dim mirrors of ruin, hang gleaming  
about ;

While the surf, like a chaos of stars,  
like a rout

Of death flames, like whirlpools of  
fire-flowing iron,

With splendour and terror the black  
ship environ ;

Or like sulphur-flakes hurled from a  
mine of pale fire,

In fountains spout o'er it. In many  
a spire

The pyramid-billows, with white  
points of brine,

In the cope of the lightning incon-  
stantly shine,

As piercing the sky from the floor of  
the sea.

The great ship seems splitting ! it  
cracks as a tree,

While an earthquake is splintering its  
root, ere the blast

Of the whirlwind that stript it of  
branches has passed.

The intense thunder-balls which are  
raining from heaven

Have shattered its mast, and it stands  
black and riven.

The chinks suck destruction. The  
heavy dead hulk

On the living sea rolls an inanimate  
bulk,  
Like a corpse on the clay which is  
hung'ring to fold  
Its corruption around it. Mean-  
while, from the hold,  
One deck is burst up from the waters  
below,  
And it splits like the ice when the  
thaw-breezes blow  
O'er the lakes of the desert ! Who sit  
on the other ?  
Is that all the crew that lie burying  
each other,  
Like the dead in a breach, round the  
foremast ? Are those  
Twin tigers, who burst, when the  
waters arose, [the hold  
In the agony of terror, their chains in  
(What now makes them tame, is what  
then made them bold)  
Who crouch, side by side, and have  
driven, like a crank,  
The deep grip of their claws through  
the vibrating plank ?  
Are these all ?

Nine weeks the tall  
vessel had lain  
On the windless expanse of the  
watery plain,  
Where the death-darting sun cast no  
shadow at noon,  
And there seemed to be fire in the  
beams of the moon,  
Till a lead-coloured fog gathered up  
from the deep,  
Whose breath was quick pestilence ;  
then, the cold sleep  
Crept, like blight through the ears of  
a thick field of corn,  
O'er the populous vessel. And even  
and morn,  
With their hammocks for coffins the  
seamen aghast  
Like dead men the dead limbs of  
their comrades cast  
Down the deep, which closed on them  
above and around,  
And the sharks and the dogfish their  
grave-clothes unbound,  
And were glutted like Jews with this  
manna rained down  
From God on their wilderness. One  
after one  
The mariners died ; on the eve of this  
day,

When the tempest was gathering in  
cloudy array,  
But seven remained. Six the thun-  
der had smitten,  
And they lie black as mummies on  
which Time has written  
His scorn of the embalmer ; the  
seventh, from the deck  
An oak splinter pierced through his  
breast and his back,  
And hung out to the tempest, a wreck  
on the wreck.

No more ? At the helm sits a woman  
more fair  
Than heaven, when, unbinding its  
star-braided hair,  
It sinks with the sun on the earth and  
the sea.  
She clasps a bright child on her up-  
gathered knee,  
It laughs at the lightning, it mocks  
the mixed thunder  
Of the air and the sea, with desire and  
with wonder  
It is beckoning the tigers to rise and  
come near,  
It would play with those eyes where  
the radiance of fear  
Is outshining the meteors ; its bosom  
beats high,  
The heart-fire of pleasure has kindled  
its eye ;  
Whilst its mother's is lustreless.  
" Smile not, my child,  
But sleep deeply and sweetly, and so  
be beguiled  
Of the pang that awaits us, whatever  
that be,  
So dreadful since thou must divide it  
with me !  
Dream, sleep ! This pale bosom, thy  
cradle and bed,  
Will it rock thee not, infant ? 'Tis  
beating with dread !  
Alas ! what is life, what is death, what  
are we,  
That when the ship sinks we no longer  
may be ?  
What ! to see thee no more, and to  
feel thee no more ? [before ?  
To be after life what we have been  
Not to touch those sweet hands, not  
to look on those eyes,  
Those lips, and that hair, all that  
smiling disguise

Thou yet wearest, sweet spirit, which  
 I, day by day,  
 Have so long called my child, but  
 which now fades away  
 Like a rainbow, and I the fallen  
 shower ? ”

Lo ! the ship  
 Is settling, it topples, the leeward  
 ports dip ;  
 The tigers leap up when they feel the  
 slow brine  
 Crawling inch by inch on them ; hair,  
 ears, limbs, and eyne,  
 Stand rigid with horror ; a loud, long,  
 hoarse cry  
 Burst at once from their vitals tre-  
 mendously,  
 And 'tis borne down the mountainous  
 vale of the wave,  
 Rebounding, like thunder, from crag  
 to cave,  
 Mixed with the clash of the lashing  
 rain,  
 Hurried on by the might of the hurri-  
 cane :  
 The hurricane came from the west,  
 and passed on  
 By the path of the gate of the eastern  
 sun,  
 Transversely dividing the stream of  
 the storm ; [form  
 As an arrowy serpent, pursuing the  
 Of an elephant, bursts through the  
 brakes of the waste.  
 Black as a cormorant the screaming  
 blast,  
 Between ocean and heaven, like an  
 ocean, passed,  
 Till it came to the clouds on the verge  
 of the world  
 Which, based on the sea and to hea-  
 ven upcurled,  
 Like columns and walls did surround  
 and sustain  
 The dome of the tempest ; it rent  
 them in twain,  
 As a flood rends its barriers of moun-  
 tainous crag ;  
 And the dense clouds in many a ruin  
 and rag,  
 Like the stones of a temple ere earth-  
 quake has passed,  
 Like the dust of its fall, on the whirl-  
 wind are cast ;  
 They are scattered like foam on the  
 torrent ; and where

The wind has burst out through the  
 chasm, from the air  
 Of clear morning, the beams of the  
 sunrise flow in,  
 Unimpeded, keen, golden, and crys-  
 talline,  
 Banded armies of light and of air ; at  
 one gate  
 They encounter, but interpenetrate.  
 And that breach in the tempest is  
 widening away,  
 And the caverns of cloud are torn up  
 by the day,  
 And the fierce winds are sinking with  
 weary wings,  
 Lulled by the motion and murmur-  
 ings,  
 And the long glassy heave of the rock-  
 ing sea,  
 And over head glorious, but dreadful  
 to see,  
 The wrecks of the tempest, like va-  
 pours of gold,  
 Are consuming in sunrise. The  
 heaped waves behold,  
 The deep calm of blue heaven dilating  
 above,  
 And, like passions made still by the  
 presence of Love,  
 Beneath the clear surface reflecting it  
 slide  
 Tremulous with soft influence ; ex-  
 tending its tide  
 From the Andes to Atlas, round  
 mountain and isle,  
 Round sea-birds and wrecks, paved  
 with heaven's azure smile,  
 The wide world of waters is vibrating.  
 Where  
 Is the ship ? On the verge of the  
 wave where it lay  
 One tiger is mingled in ghastly affray  
 With a sea-snake. The foam and the  
 smoke of the battle  
 Stain the clear air with sunbows ; the  
 jar, and the rattle  
 Of solid bones crushed by the in-  
 finite stress  
 Of the snake's adamantine volumi-  
 nousness ;  
 And the hum of the hot blood that  
 spouts and rains  
 Where the gripe of the tiger has  
 wounded the veins,  
 Swollen with rage, strength, and  
 effort ; the whirl and the splash

As of some hideous engine whose  
brazen teeth smash  
The thin winds and soft waves into  
thunder! the screams  
And hissings crawl fast o'er the  
smooth ocean-streams,  
Each sound like a centipede. Near  
this commotion,  
A blue shark is hanging within the  
blue ocean,  
The fin-winged tomb of the victor.  
The other  
Is winning his way from the fate of  
his brother,  
To his own with the speed of despair.  
Lo! a boat  
Advances; twelve rowers with the  
impulse of thought  
Urge on the keen keel, the brine  
foams. At the stern  
Three marksmen stand levelling.  
Hot bullets burn  
In the breast of the tiger, which yet  
bears him on  
To his refuge and ruin. One frag-  
ment alone,  
'Tis dwindling and sinking, 'tis now  
almost gone,  
Of the wreck of the vessel peers out  
of the sea.  
With her left hand she grasps it im-  
petuously,  
With her right she sustains her fair  
infant. Death, Fear,  
Love, Beauty, are mixed in the atmo-  
sphere,  
Which trembles and burns with the  
fervour of dread  
Around her wild eyes, her bright hand,  
and her head,  
Like a meteor of light o'er the waters!  
her child  
Is yet smiling, and playing, and mur-  
muring; so smiled  
The false deep ere the storm. Like a  
sister and brother  
The child and the ocean still smile on  
each other,  
Whilst ———

## THE CLOUD

## I

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting  
flowers,  
From the seas and the streams;

I bear light shades for the leaves when  
laid  
In their noonday dreams.  
From my wings are shaken the dews  
that waken  
The sweet buds every one,  
When rocked to rest on their mother's  
breast,  
As she dances about the sun.  
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,  
And whiten the green plains under,  
And then again I dissolve it in rain,  
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

## II

I sift the snow on the mountains be-  
low,  
And their great pines groan aghast;  
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,  
While I sleep in the arms of the  
blast.  
Sublime on the towers of my skyey  
bowers,  
Lightning my pilot sits,  
In a cavern under is fettered the  
thunder,  
It struggles and howls at fits;  
Over earth and ocean with gentle  
motion,  
This pilot is guiding me,  
Lured by the love of the genii that  
move  
In the depths of the purple sea;  
Over the rills, and the crags, and the  
hills,  
Over the lakes and the plains,  
Wherever he dream, under mountain  
or stream,  
The Spirit he loves remains;  
And I all the while bask in heaven's  
blue smile,  
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

## III

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor  
eyes,  
And his burning plumes outspread,  
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,  
When the morning star shines dead.  
As on the jag of a mountain crag,  
Which an earthquake rocks and  
swings,  
An eagle alit one moment may sit  
In the light of its golden wings.  
And when sunset may breathe, from  
the lit sea beneath,  
Its ardours of rest and of love,

And the crimson pall of eve may fall  
From the depth of heaven above,  
With wings folded I rest, on mine airy  
nest,  
As still as a brooding dove.

## IV

That orb'd maiden, with white fire  
laden,  
Whom mortals call the moon,  
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like  
floor,  
By the midnight breezes strewn :  
And wherever the beat of her unseen  
feet,  
Which only the angels hear,  
May have broken the woof of my  
tent's thin roof,  
The stars peep behind her and  
peer ;  
And I laugh to see them whirl and  
flee,  
Like a swarm of golden bees,  
When I widen the rent in my wind-  
built tent,  
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,  
Like strips of the sky fallen through  
me on high,  
Are each paved with the moon  
and these.

## V

I bind the sun's throne with the  
burning zone,  
And the moon's with a girdle of  
pearl ;  
The volcanoes are dim, and the stars  
reel and swim,  
When the whirlwinds my banner  
unfurl.  
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like  
shape,  
Over a torrent sea,  
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof,  
The mountains its columns be,  
The triumphal arch through which  
I march,  
With hurricane, fire, and snow,  
When the powers of the air are  
chained to my chair,  
Is the million-coloured bow ;  
The sphere-fire above its soft colours  
wove,  
While the moist earth was laughing  
below.

## VI

I am the daughter of earth and water,  
And the nursling of the sky :  
I pass through the pores of the ocean  
and shores ;  
I change, but I cannot die.  
For after the rain, when with never  
a stain,  
The pavilion of heaven is bare,  
And the winds and sunbeams with  
their convex gleams,  
Build up the blue dome of air,  
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,  
And out of the caverns of rain,  
Like a child from the womb, like a  
ghost from the tomb,  
I arise and unbuild it again.

## TO A SKYLARK

## I

HAIL to thee, blithe spirit !  
Bird thou never wert,  
That from heaven, or near it,  
Pourest thy full heart  
In profuse strains of unpremeditated  
art.

## II

Higher still and higher,  
From the earth thou springest  
Like a cloud of fire ;  
The blue deep thou wingest,  
And singing still dost soar, and  
soaring ever singest.

## III

In the golden lightning  
Of the sunken sun,  
O'er which clouds are brighten-  
ing,  
Thou dost float and run ;  
Like an unbodied joy whose race is  
just begun.

## IV

The pale purple even  
Melts around thy flight ;  
Like a star of heaven,  
In the broad daylight  
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy  
shrill delight.

## V

Keen as are the arrows  
Of that silver sphere,

Whose intense lamp narrows  
In the white dawn clear,  
Until we hardly see, we feel that it  
is there.

## VI

All the earth and air  
With thy voice is loud,  
As, when night is bare,  
From one lonely cloud  
The moon rains out her beams, and  
heaven is overflowed.

## VII

What thou art we know not ;  
What is most like thee ?  
From rainbow clouds there flow  
not  
Drops so bright to see,  
As from thy presence showers a rain  
of melody.

## VIII

Like a poet hidden  
In the light of thought,  
Singing hymns unbidden,  
Till the world is wrought  
To sympathy with hopes and fears  
it heeded not :

## IX

Like a high-born maiden  
In a palace tower,  
Soothing her love-laden  
Soul in secret hour  
With music sweet as love, which  
overflows her bower :

## X

Like a glow-worm golden  
In a dell of dew,  
Scattering unbeholden  
Its aerial hue  
Among the flowers and grass, which  
screen it from the view :

## XI

Like a rose embowered  
In its own green leaves,  
By warm winds deflowered,  
Till the scent it gives  
Makes faint with too much sweet  
these heavy-winged thieves.

## XII

Sound of vernal showers  
On the twinkling grass,

Rain-awakened flowers,  
All that ever was  
Joyous and clear, and fresh, thy  
music doth surpass.

## XIII

Teach us, sprite or bird,  
What sweet thoughts are  
thine :  
I have never heard  
Praise of love or wine  
That panted forth a flood of rapture  
so divine.

## XIV

Chorus hymeneal,  
Or triumphal chaunt,  
Matched with thine would be all  
But an empty vaunt—  
A thing wherein we feel there is some  
hidden want.

## XV

What objects are the fountains  
Of thy happy strain ?  
What fields, or waves, or moun-  
tains ?  
What shapes of sky or plain ?  
What love of thine own kind ? what  
ignorance of pain ?

## XVI

With thy clear keen joyance  
Languor cannot be :  
Shadow of annoyance  
Never came near thee :  
Thou lovest ; but ne'er knew love's  
sad satiety.

## XVII

Waking or asleep,  
Thou of death must deem  
Things more true and deep  
Than we mortals dream,  
Or how could thy notes flow in such  
a crystal stream ?

## XVIII

We look before and after,  
And pine for what is not :  
Our sincerest laughter  
With some pain is fraught ;  
Our sweetest songs are those that  
tell of saddest thought.

## XIX

Yet if we could scorn  
Hate, and pride, and fear ;  
If we were things born  
Not to shed a tear,  
I know not how thy joy we ever  
should come near.

## XX

Better than all measures  
Of delightful sound,  
Better than all treasures  
That in books are found,  
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner  
of the ground !

## XXI

Teach me half the gladness  
That thy brain must know,  
Such harmonious madness  
From my lips would flow,  
The world should listen then, as I am  
listening now.

## TO ———

I FEAR thy kisses, gentle maiden,  
Thou needest not fear mine ;  
My spirit is too deeply laden  
Ever to burthen thine.

I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy  
motion,  
Thou needest not fear mine ;  
Innocent is the heart's devotion  
With which I worship thine.

## LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY

THE fountains mingle with the river,  
And the rivers with the ocean,  
The winds of heaven mix for ever  
With a sweet emotion ;  
Nothing in the world is single ;  
All things by a law divine  
In one another's being mingle—  
Why not I with thine ?

See the mountains kiss high heaven,  
And the waves clasp one another ;  
No sister flower would be forgiven  
If it disdained its brother ;  
And the sunlight clasps the earth,  
And the moonbeams kiss the sea ;—  
What are all these kissings worth,  
If thou kiss not me ?

## ODE TO LIBERTY

Yet freedom, yet, thy banner torn but  
flying,  
Streams like a thunder-storm against the  
wind.—BYRON.

## I

A GLORIOUS people vibrated again  
The lightning of the nations :  
Liberty,  
From heart to heart, from tower to  
tower, o'er Spain,  
Scattering contagious fire into the  
sky,  
Gleamed. My soul spurned the  
chains of its dismay,  
And, in the rapid plumes of  
song,  
Clothed itself sublime and  
strong ;  
As a young eagle soars the morn'g  
clouds among,  
Hovering inverse o'er its accus-  
tomed prey ;  
Till from its station in the  
heaven of fame  
The Spirit's whirlwind rapt it, and  
the ray  
Of the remotest sphere of living  
flame  
Which paves the void, was from  
behind it flung.  
As foam from a ship's swiftness,  
when there came  
A voice out of the deep ; I will  
record the same.

## II

“The Sun and the serenest Moon  
sprang forth ;  
The burning stars of the abyss were  
hurl'd  
Into the depths of heaven. The  
dædal earth,  
That island in the ocean of the  
world,  
Hung in its cloud of all-sustaining  
air :  
But this divinest universe  
Was yet a chaos and a curse,  
For thou wert not ; but power from  
worst producing worse,  
The spirit of the beasts was kindled  
there,  
And of the birds, and of the  
watery forms,

And there was war among them  
and despair

Within them, raging without  
truce or terms :

The bosom of their violated nurse  
Groaned, for beasts warred on  
beasts, and worms on  
worms,

And men on men ; each heart was  
as a hell of storms.

III

"Man, the imperial shape, then multi-  
plied

His generations under the pavilion  
Of the Sun's throne : palace and  
pyramid,

Temple and prison, to many a  
swarming million,  
Were, as to mountain-wolves their  
ragged caves.

This human living multitude  
Was savage, cunning, blind,  
and rude,

For thou wert not ; but o'er the  
populous solitude,

Like one fierce cloud over a waste  
of waves,

Hung tyranny ; beneath, sat  
deified

The sister-pest, congregator of  
slaves :

Into the shadow of her pinions  
wide,

Anarchs and priests who feed on gold  
and blood,

Till with the stain their inmost  
souls are dyed,

Drove the astonished herds of men  
from every side.

IV

"The nodding promontories, and blue  
isles,"

And cloud-like mountains, and  
dividuous waves

Of Greece, basked glorious in the  
open smiles

Of favouring heaven : from their  
enchanted caves

Prophetic echoes flung dim melody  
On the unapprehensive wild.

The vine, the corn, the olive  
mild,

Grew, savage yet, to human use  
unreconciled ;

And like unfolded flowers beneath  
the sea,

Like the man's thought dark in  
the infant's brain,

Like aught that is which wraps  
what is to be,

Art's deathless dreams lay  
veiled by many a vein

Of Parian stone ; and yet a speechless  
child,

Verse murmured, and Philosophy  
did strain

Her lidless eyes for thee ; when  
o'er the Ægean main

V

"Athens arose : a city such as vision  
Builds from the purple crags and  
silver towers

Of battlemented cloud, as in derision  
Of kindest masonry : the ocean  
floors

Pave it ; the evening sky pavilions it ;  
Its portals are inhabited

By thunder-zoned winds, each  
head

Within its cloudy wings with sun-fire  
garlanded,

A divine work ! Athens diviner yet  
Gleamed with its crest of  
columns, on the will

Of man, as on a mount of diamond,  
set ;

For thou wert, and thine all-  
creative skill

Peopled, with forms that mock the  
eternal dead

In marble immortality, that hill  
Which was thine earliest throne  
and latest oracle.

VI

"Within the surface of Time's fleet  
river

Its wrinkled image lies, as then it  
lay

Immovably unquiet, and for ever  
It trembles, but it cannot pass  
away !

The voices of thy bards and sages  
thunder

With an earth-awakening  
blast

Through the caverns of the  
past ;

Religion veils her eyes ; Oppression  
shrinks aghast :



A winged sound of joy and love,  
 and wonder,  
 Which soars where Expectation  
 never flew,  
 Rending the veil of space and time  
 asunder !  
 One ocean feeds the clouds, and  
 streams, and dew ;  
 One sun illumines heaven ; one spirit  
 vast  
 With life and love makes c' aos ever  
 new,  
 As Athens doth the world with  
 thy delight renew.

## VII

" Then Rome was, and from thy deep  
 bosom fairest,  
 Like a wolf-cub from a Cadmæan  
 Mænad,<sup>1</sup>  
 She drew the milk of greatness,  
 though thy dearest  
 From that Elysian food was yet  
 unweaned ;  
 And many a deed of terrible upright-  
 ness

By thy sweet love was sancti-  
 fied ;  
 And in thy smile, and by thy  
 side,  
 Saintly Camillus lived, and firm  
 Atilius died.  
 But when tears stained thy robe of  
 vestal whiteness,  
 And gold profaned thy Capitolian  
 throne,  
 Thou didst desert, with spirit-  
 winged lightness,  
 The senate of the tyrants : they  
 sunk prone  
 Slaves of one tyrant. Palatinus  
 sighed  
 Faint echoes of Ionian song ; that  
 tone  
 Thou didst delay to hear, lament-  
 ing to disown.

## VIII

" From what Hyrcanian glen or frozen  
 hill,  
 Or piny promontory of the Arctic  
 main,  
 Or utmost islet inaccessible,

<sup>1</sup> See the ' Bacchæ ' of Euripides.

Didst thou lament the ruin of thy  
 reign,  
 Teaching the woods and waves, and  
 desert rocks,  
 And every Naiad's ice-cold  
 urn,  
 To talk in echoes sad and  
 stern,  
 Of that sublimest lore which man  
 had dared unlearn  
 For neither didst thou watch the  
 wizard flocks  
 Of the Scald's dreams, nor haunt  
 the Druid's sleep.  
 What if the tears rained through  
 thy shattered locks,  
 Were quickly dried ? for thou  
 didst groan, not weep,  
 When from its sea of death to kill  
 and burn,  
 The Galilean serpent forth did  
 creep,  
 And made thy world an undistin-  
 guishable heap.

## IX

" A thousand years the Earth cried  
 ' Where art thou ? '  
 And then the shadow of thy coming  
 fell  
 On Saxon Alfred's olive-cinctured  
 brow :  
 And many a warrior-peopled cita-  
 del,  
 Like rocks, which fire lifts out of the  
 flat deep,  
 Arose in sacred Italy,  
 Frowning o'er the tempestuous  
 sea  
 Of kings, and priests, and slaves, in  
 tower-crowned majesty :  
 That multitudinous anarchy did  
 sweep,  
 And burst around their walls  
 like idle foam,  
 Whilst from the human spirit's  
 deepest deep,  
 Strange melody with love and  
 awe struck dumb  
 Dissonant arms ; and Art which  
 cannot die,  
 With divine want traced on our  
 earthly home  
 Fit imagery to pave heaven's ever-  
 lasting dome.

## x

"Thou huntress swifter than the  
Moon ! thou terror  
Of the world's wolves ! thou bearer  
of the quiver,  
Whose sunlike shafts pierce tempest-  
winged Error,  
As light may pierce the clouds when  
they dis sever  
In the calm regions of the orient day !  
Luther caught thy wakening  
glance :  
Like lightning from his leaden  
lance  
Reflected, it dissolved the visions of  
the trance  
In which, as in a tomb, the nations  
lay ;  
And England's prophets hailed  
thee as their queen,  
In songs whose music cannot pass  
away,  
Though it must flow for ever :  
not unseen  
Before the spirit-sighted countenance  
Of Milton didst thou pass, from  
the sad scene  
Beyond whose night he saw, with  
a dejected mien.

## xi

"The eager hours and unreluctant  
years  
As on a dawn-illumin'd mountain  
stood,  
Trampling to silence their loud hopes  
and fears,  
Darkening each other with their  
multitude,  
And cried aloud, 'Liberty !' Indig-  
nation  
Answered Pity from her cave ;  
Death grew pale within the  
grave.  
And desolation howled to the de-  
stroyer, 'Save !'  
When, like heaven's sun, girt by  
the exhalation  
Of its own glorious light, thou  
didst arise,  
Chasing thy foes from nation unto  
nation  
Like shadows : as if day had  
cloven the skies  
At dreaming midnight o'er the  
Western wave,

Men started, staggering with a  
glad surprise,  
Under the lightnings of thine  
familiar eyes.

## xii

"Thou heaven of earth ! what spells  
could pall thee then,  
In ominous eclipse ? A thousand  
years,  
Bred from the slime of deep oppres-  
sion's den,  
Dyed all thy liquid light with blood  
and tears,  
Till thy sweet stars could weep the  
stain away ;  
How like Bacchanals of blood  
Round France, the ghastly  
vintage, stood  
Destruction's sceptred slaves, and  
Folly's mitred brood !  
When one, like them, but mightier  
far than they,  
The Anarch of thine own be-  
wilder'd powers,  
Rose : armies mingled in obscure  
array,  
Like clouds with clouds, darken-  
ing the sacred bowers  
Of serene heaven. He, by the past  
pursued,  
Rests with those dead but unfor-  
gotten hours,  
Whose ghosts scare victor kings  
in their ancestral towers.

## xiii

"England yet sleeps : was she not  
called of old ?  
Spain calls her now, as with its  
thrilling thunder  
Vesuvius wakens Ætna, and the cold  
Snow-crag by its reply are cloven  
in sunder :  
O'er the lit waves every Æolian isle  
From Pithecusa to Pelorus  
Howls, and leaps, and glares  
in chorus :  
They cry, 'Be dim, ye lamps of heaven  
suspended o'er us,'  
Her chains are threads of gold, she  
need but smile  
And they dissolve ; but Spain's  
were links of steel,  
Till bit to dust by virtue's keenest  
file.

Twins of a single destiny ! appeal  
To the eternal years enthroned  
before us,  
In the dim West ; impress us from  
a seal,  
All ye have thought and done !  
Time cannot dare conceal.

## xiv

"Tomb of Arminius ! render up thy  
dead

Till, like a standard from a watch-  
tower's staff,  
His soul may stream over the tyrant's  
head !

Thy victory shall be his epitaph,  
Wild Bacchanal of truth's mysterious  
wine,

King-deluded Germany,  
His dead spirit lives in thee.  
Why do we fear or hope ? thou art  
already free !

And thou, lost Paradise of this  
divine

And glorious world ! thou  
flowery wilderness !

Thou island of eternity ! thou  
shrine

Where desolation, clothed with  
loveliness,  
Worships the thing thou wert ! O  
Italy,

Gather thy blood into thy heart ;  
repress

The beasts who make their dens  
thy sacred palaces.

## xv

"O that the free would stamp the  
impious name

Of 'King' into the dust ; or write  
it there,

So that this blot upon the page of  
fame

Were as the serpent's path, which  
the light air

Erases, and the flat sands close be-  
hind !

Ye the oracle have heard :

Lift the victory-flashing sword,  
And cut the snaky knots of this foul  
Gordian word,

Which, weak itself as stubble, yet  
can bind

Into a mass, irrefragably firm,

The axes and the rods which awe  
mankind :

The sound has poison in it, 'tis  
the sperm

Of what makes life foul, cankerous,  
and abhorred ;

Disdain not thou, at thine ap-  
pointed term,

To set thine armed heel on this  
reluctant worm.

## xvi

"O that the wise from their bright  
minds would kindle

Such lamps within the dome of this  
dim world,

That the pale name of PRIEST might  
shrink and dwindle

Into the hell from which it first  
was hurled,

A scoff of impious pride from fiends  
impure,

Till human thoughts might  
kneel alone,

Each before the judgment-  
throne

Of its own aweless soul, or of the  
power unknown !

O that the words which make the  
thoughts obscure

From which they spring, as  
clouds of glimmering dew

From a white lake blot heaven's  
blue portraiture,

Were stript of their thin masks  
and various hue,

And frowns and smiles and splen-  
dours not their own,

Till in the nakedness of false and  
true

They stand before their Lord, each  
to receive its due.

## xvii

"He who taught man to vanquish  
whatsoever

Can be between the cradle and the  
grave,

Crowned him the King of Life. O  
vain endeavour !

If on his own high will, a willing  
slave,

He has enthroned the oppression and  
the oppressor.

What if earth can clothe and  
feed

Amplest millions at their need,  
 And power in thought be as the tree  
     within the seed ?  
 Or what if Art, an ardent inter-  
     cessor,  
     Diving on fiery wings to Nature's  
     throne,  
 Checks the great mother stooping to  
     caress her,  
 And cries, 'Give me, thy child,  
     dominion  
 Over all height and depth ?' if Life  
     can breed  
 New wants, and wealth from those  
     who toil and groan,  
 Rend of thy gifts and hers a  
     thousandfold for one.

## XVIII

"Come thou, but lead out of the  
     inmost cave  
 Of man's deep spirit, as the Morn-  
     ing Star  
 Beckons the Sun from the Eoan wave,  
 Wisdom. I hear the pennons of  
     her car  
 Self-moving like cloud charioted by  
     flame ;  
     Comes she not, and come ye  
     not,  
     Rulers of eternal thought,  
 To judge with solemn truth life's ill-  
     apportioned lot ?  
 Blind Love, and equal Justice, and  
     the Fame  
     Of what has been, the Hope of  
     what will be ?  
 O, Liberty ! if such could be thy  
     name  
     Wert thou disjoined from these,  
     or they from thee :  
 If thine or theirs were treasures to  
     be bought  
     By blood & tears, have not the  
     wise and free  
 -Wept tears, and blood like tears ?"  
     The solemn harmony

## XIX

Paused, and the spirit of that mighty  
     singing  
 To its abyss was suddenly with-  
     drawn ;  
 Then as a wild swan, when sublimely  
     winging

Its path athwart the thunder-  
     smoke of dawn,  
 Sinks headlong through the aerial  
     golden light  
     On the heavy sounding plain,  
     When the bolt has pierced its  
     brain ;  
 As summer clouds dissolve unbur-  
     thened of their rain ;  
 As a far taper fades with fading  
     night ;  
 As a brief insect dies with dying  
     day,  
 My song, its pinions disarrayed of  
     might,  
 Drooped ; o'er it closed the  
     echoes far away  
 Of the great voice which did its flight  
     sustain,  
 As waves which lately paved his  
     watery way  
 Hiss round a drowner's head in  
     their tempestuous play.

## ARETHUSA

ARETHUSA arose  
 From her couch of snows  
 In the Acroceraunian mountains,—  
 From cloud and from crag  
 With many a jag,  
 Shepherding her bright fountains.  
 She leapt down the rocks  
 With her rainbow locks  
 Streaming among the streams ;—  
 Her steps paved with green  
 The downward ravine  
 Which slopes to the western gleams :  
 And gliding and springing,  
 She went, ever singing,  
 In murmurs, as soft as sleep ;  
 The Earth seemed to love her,  
 And Heaven smiled above her,  
 As she lingered towards the deep.

Then Alpheus bold,  
 On his glacier cold,  
 With his trident the mountains  
     strook ;  
 And opened a chasm  
 In the rocks :—with the spasm  
 All Erymanthus shook.  
 And the black south wind  
 It concealed behind

The urns of the silent snow,  
And earthquake and thunder  
Did render in sunder  
The bars of the springs below :  
The beard and the hair  
Of the river God were  
Seen through the torrent's sweep,  
As he followed the light  
Of the fleet nymph's flight  
To the brink of the Dorian deep.

" Oh, save me ! Oh, guide me !  
And bid the deep hide me !  
For he grasps me now by the hair ! "  
The loud Ocean heard,  
To its blue depth stirred,  
And divided at her prayer ;  
And under the water  
The Earth's white daughter  
Fled like a sunny beam ;  
Behind her descended  
Her billows, unblended  
With the brackish Dorian stream :  
Like a gloomy stain  
On the emerald main  
Alpheus rushed behind,—  
As an eagle pursuing  
A dove to its run  
Down the streams of the cloudy wind.

Under the bowers  
Where the Ocean Powers  
Sit on their pearly thrones :  
Through the coral woods  
Of the weltering floods,  
Over heaps of unvalued stones ;  
Through the dim beams  
Which amid the streams  
Weave a network of coloured light ;  
And under the caves,  
Where the shadowy waves  
Are as green as the forest's night : —  
Outspeeding the shark,  
And the swordfish dark,  
Under the ocean foam,  
And up through the rifts  
Of the mountain cliffs  
They passed to their Dorian home.

And now from their fountains  
In Enna's mountains,  
Down one vale where the morning  
basks,  
Like friends once parted  
Grown single-hearted,  
They ply their watery tasks.

At sunrise they leap  
From their crattles steep  
In the cave of the shelving hill ;  
At noontide they flow  
Through the woods below  
And the meadows of Asphodel ;  
And at night they sleep  
In the rocking deep  
Beneath the Ortygian shore ;—  
Like spirits that lie  
In the azure sky  
When they love but live no more.

PISA.

### HYMN OF APOLLO

THE sleepless Hours who watch me as  
I lie,  
Curtained with star-inwoven  
tapestries  
From the broad moonlight of the sky,  
Fanning the busy dreams from  
my dim eyes, —  
Waken me when their Mother, the  
grey Dawn,  
Tells them that dreams and that the  
moon is gone.

Then I arise, and climbing Heaven's  
blue dome,  
I walk over the mountains and the  
waves,  
Leaving my robe upon the ocean  
foam ;  
My footsteps pave the clouds with  
fire ; the caves  
Are filled with my bright presence,  
and the air  
Leaves the green earth to my em-  
braces bare.

The sunbeams are my shafts, with  
which I kill  
Deceit, that loves the night and  
fears the day ;  
All men who do or even imagine ill  
Fly me, and from the glory of my  
ray  
Good minds and open actions take  
new might,  
Until diminished by the reign of  
night.

I feed the clouds, the rainbows, and  
the flowers,

With their ethereal colours; the  
Moon's globe  
And the pure stars in their eternal  
bowers  
Are tintured with my power as  
with a robe;  
Whatever lamps on Earth or Heaven  
may shine  
Are portions of one power, which is  
mine.

I stand at noon upon the peak of  
Heaven,  
Then with unwilling steps I wander  
down  
Into the clouds of the Atlantic even;  
For grief that I depart they weep  
and frown:  
What look is more delightful than the  
smile  
With which I soothe them from the  
western isle?

I am the eye with which the Universe  
Beholds itself and knows itself  
divine;  
All harmony of instrument or verse,  
All prophecy, all medicine are  
mine,  
All light of Art or Nature;—to my  
song  
Victory and praise in their own right  
belong.

## HYMN OF PAN

From the forests and highlands  
We come, we come;  
From the river-girt islands,  
Where loud waves are dumb  
Listening to my sweet pipings.  
The wind in the reeds and the rushes,  
The bees on the bells of thyme,  
The birds on the myrtle bushes,  
The cicale above in the lime,  
And the lizards below in the grass,  
Were as silent as ever old Tmolus;  
was,  
Listening to my sweet pipings.

<sup>1</sup> This and the former poem were written at the request of a friend, to be inserted in a drama on the subject of Midas. Apollo and Pan contended before Tmolus for the prize in music.

Liquid Peneus was flowing,  
And all dark Tempe lay  
In Pelion's shadow, outgrowing  
The light of the dying day,  
Speeded with my sweet  
pipings.  
The Sileni, and Sylvans, and Fauns,  
And the Nymphs of the woods and  
waves,  
To the edge of the moist river lawns,  
And the brink of the dewy caves,  
And all that did then attend and fol-  
low,  
Were silent with love, as you now,  
Apollo,  
With envy of my sweet pipings.

I sang of the dancing stars,  
I sang of the dædal Earth,  
And of Heaven—and the giant wars,  
And Love, and Death, and  
Birth,—  
And then I changed my pip-  
ings,—  
Singing how down the vale of Menalus  
I pursued a maiden and clasped a  
reed  
Gods and men, we are all deluded  
thus!  
It breaks in our bosom and then we  
bleed:  
All wept, as I think both ye now  
would,  
If envy or age had not frozen your  
blood,  
At the sorrow of my sweet pip-  
ings.

## THE QUESTION

I DREAMED that, as I wandered by  
the way,  
Bare winter suddenly was changed  
to spring,  
And gentle odours led my steps astray,  
Mixed with a sound of waters mur-  
muring  
Along a shelving bank of turf, which  
lay  
Under a copse, and hardly dared to  
fling  
Its green arms round the bosom of  
the stream,  
But kissed it and then fled, as thou  
mightiest in dream.

There grew pied wind-flowers and  
violets,  
Daisies, those pearly Arcturi of  
the earth,  
The constellated flower that never  
sets;  
Faint oxlips; tender bluebells, at  
whose birth  
The sod scarce heaved; and that tall  
flower that wets  
Its mother's face with heaven-col-  
lected tears,  
When the low wind, its playmate's  
voice, it hears.

And in the warm hedge grew lush  
eglantine,  
Green cowbind and the moonlight-  
coloured May,  
And cherry-blossoms, and white cups,  
whose wine  
Was the bright dew yet drained not  
by the day;  
And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,  
With its dark buds and leaves, wan-  
dering astray;  
And flowers azure, black, and streaked  
with gold,  
Fairer than any wakened eyes behold.

And nearer to the river's trembling  
edge  
There grew broad flag-flowers, pur-  
ple pranked with white,  
And starry river-buds among the  
sedge,  
And floating water-lilies, broad and  
bright,  
Which lit the oak that overhung the  
hedge  
With moonlight beams of their own  
watery light;  
And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep  
green  
As soothed the dazzled eye with sober  
sheen.

Methought that of these visionary  
flowers  
I made a nosegay, bound in such a  
way  
That the same hues, which in their  
natural bowers  
Were mingled or opposed, the like  
array

Kept these imprisoned children of the  
Hours  
Within my hand,—and then, elate  
and gay,  
I hastened to the spot whence I had  
come,  
That I might there present it!—Oh!  
to whom?

## THE TWO SPIRITS

### AN ALLEGORY

#### FIRST SPIRIT.

O THOU, who plumed with strong de-  
sire  
Wouldst float above the earth, be-  
ware!  
A shadow tracks thy flight of fire—  
Night is coming!  
Bright are the regions of the air,  
And among the winds and beams  
It were delight to wander there—  
Night is coming!

#### SECOND SPIRIT.

The deathless stars are bright above:  
If I would cross the shade at night,  
Within my heart is the lamp of love,  
And that is day!  
And the moon will smile with gentle  
light  
On my golden plumes where'er they  
move;  
The meteors will linger round my  
flight,  
And make night day.

#### FIRST SPIRIT.

But if the whirlwinds of darkness  
waken  
Hail, and lightning, and stormy  
rain;  
See the bounds of the air are shaken—  
Night is coming!  
The red swift clouds of the hurricane  
Yon declining sun have o'ertaken,  
The clash of the hail sweeps over the  
plain—  
Night is coming!

#### SECOND SPIRIT.

I see the light, and I hear the sound;  
I'll sail on the flood of the tempest  
dark,

With the calm within and the light  
around

Which makes night day :

And thou, when the gloom is deep and  
stark,

Look from thy dull earth, slumber-  
bound,

My moonlight flight thou then mayst  
mark

On high, far away.

Some say there is a precipice

Where one vast pine is frozen to  
ruin

O'er piles of snow and chasms of ice

Mid Alpine mountains ;

And that the languid storm, pursuing

That winged shape, for ever flies

Round those hoar branches, aye re-  
newing

Its acry fountains.

Some say when nights are dry and  
clear,

And the death-dews sleep on the  
morass,

Sweet whispers are heard by the  
traveller,

Which make night day .

And a silver shape like his early love  
doth pass

Upborne by her wild and glittering  
hair,

And when he awakes on the fragrant  
grass,

He finds night day.

### THE WANING MOON

And like a dying lady, lean and pale,  
Who totters forth, wrapt in a gauzy  
veil,

Out of her chamber, led by the insane  
And feeble wanderings of her fading  
brain,

The moon arose upon the murky earth,  
A white and shapeless mass.

### SONG OF PROSERPINE,

WHILEST GATHERING FLOWERS ON THE  
PLAIN OF ENNA

SACRED Goddess, Mother Earth,

Thou from whose immortal bosom,

S.P.

Gods, and men, and beasts have birth,  
Leaf and blade, and bud and blos-  
som,

Breathe thine influence most divine  
On thine own child, Proserpine.

If with mists of evening dew

Thou dost nourish these young  
flowers

Till they grow, in scent and hue,

Fairest children of the Hours,

Breathe thine influence most divine

On thine own child, Proserpine.

### LETTER TO MARIA GISBORNE

LEGHORN, July 1, 1820.

THE spider spreads her webs, whether  
she be

In poet's tower, cellar, or barn, or  
tree ;

The silkworm in the dark-green mul-  
berry leaves

His winding-sheet and cradle ever  
weaves !

So I, a thing whom moralists call  
worm,

Sit spinning still round this decaying  
form,

From the fine threads of rare and  
subtle thought—

No net of words in garish colours  
wrought,

To catch the idle buzzers of the day—  
But a soft cell, where, when that fades  
away,

Memory may clothe in wings my liv-  
ing name

And feed it with the a-phodels of fame,  
Which in those hearts which most re-  
member me

Grow, making love an immortality.

Whoever should behold me now, I  
wist,

Would think I were a mighty mechan-  
ist,

Bent with sublime Archimedean art  
To breathe a soul into the iron heart

Of some machine portentous, or  
strange gin,

Which by the force of figured spells  
might win

Its way over the sea, and sport there-  
in ;



<p>For round the walls are hung dread engines, such          As Vulcan never wrought for Jove to clutch          Ixion or the Titan :—or the quick Wit of that man of God, St. Dominic,          To convince Atheist, Turk, or Heretic;          Or those in philosophic councils met,          Who thought to pay some interest for the debt          They owed to Jesus Christ for their salvation,          By giving a faint foretaste of damnation          To Shakespeare, Sidney, Spenser, and the rest          Who made our land an island of the blest,          When lamp-like Spain, who now resumes her fire          On Freedom's hearth, grew dim with empire :—          With thumbscrews, wheels, with tooth and spike and jag.          With fishes found under the utmost crag          Of Cornwall, and the storm-encompassed isles, [smiles]          Where to the sky the rude sea seldom          Unless in treacherous wrath, as on the morn          When the exulting elements in scorn,          Satiated with destroyed destruction, lay          Sleeping in beauty on their mangled prey,          As panthers sleep : and other strange and dread          Magical forms the brick-floor over-spread—          Proteus transformed to metal did not make          More figures, or more strange ; nor did he take          Such shapes of unintelligible brass,          Or heap himself in such a horrid mass          Of tin and iron not to be understood,          And forms of unimaginable wood,          To puzzle Tubal Cain and all his brood :          Great screws, and cones, and wheels, and grooved blocks,          The elements of what will stand the shocks          Of wave and wind and time. Upon the table</p>	<p>More knacks and quips there be than I am able          To catalogue in this verse of mine :          A pretty bowl of wood—not full of wine,          But quicksilver ; that dew which the gnomes drink          When at their subterranean toil they swink,          Pledging the demons of the earthquake who          Reply to them in lava—cry, "Halloo!"          And call out to the cities o'er their head,—          Roofs, towns, and shrines,—the dying and the dead          Crash through the chinks of earth—and then all quaff          Another rouse, and hold their sides and laugh.          This quicksilver no gnome has drunk—within          The walnut-bowl it lies, veined and thin, [stains]          In colour like the wake of light that The Tuscan deep, when from the moist moon rains          The inmost shower of its white fire—the breeze          Is still—blue heaven smiles over the pale seas.          And in this bowl of quicksilver—for I Yield to the impulse of an infancy          Outlasting manhood—I have made to float          A rude idealism of a paper boat—          A hollow screw with cogs—Henry will know          The thing I mean, and laugh at me,—if so          He fears not I should do more mischief. Next          Lie bills and calculations much perplexed,          With steamboats, frigates, and machinery quaint,          Traced over them in blue and yellow paint.          Then comes a range of mathematical Instruments, for plans nautical and statical,          A heap of rosin, a green broken glass          With ink in it ;—a china cup that was          What it will never be again, I think,          A thing from which sweet lips were wont to drink</p>
--	---

The liquor doctors rail at—and which  
 I  
 Will quaff in spite of them—and  
 when we die  
 We'll toss up who died first of drink-  
 ing tea,  
 And cry out, "Heads or tails?"  
 where'er we be.  
 Near that a dusty paint-box, some  
 old hooks,  
 A half-burnt match, an ivory block,  
 three books,  
 Where conic sections, spherics, log-  
 arithms,  
 To great Laplace, from Saunderson  
 and Sims,  
 Lie heaped in their harmonious dis-  
 array  
 Of figures,—disentangle them who  
 may.  
 Baron de Tott's Memoirs beside them  
 lie,  
 And some old volumes of old chemis-  
 try.  
 Near them a most inexplicable thing.  
 With least in the middle - I'm con-  
 jecturing  
 How to make Henry understand ;—  
 but—no,  
 I'll leave, as Spenser says, with many  
 mo,  
 This secret in the pregnant womb of  
 time,  
 Too vast a matter for so weak a  
 rhyme.

And here like some weird Archimage  
 sit I,  
 Plotting dark spells, and devilish  
 enginery,  
 The self-impelling steam-wheels of  
 the mind  
 Which pump up oaths from clergy-  
 men, and grind  
 The gentle spirit of our meek reviews  
 Into a powdery foam of salt abuse,  
 Ruffling the ocean of their self-con-  
 tent :—  
 I sit—and smile or sigh as is my bent,  
 But not for them—Libeccio rushes  
 round  
 With an inconstant and an idle  
 sound,  
 I heed him more than them—the  
 thunder-smoke

Is gathering on the mountains, like a  
 cloak  
 Folded athwart their shoulders broad  
 and bare ;  
 The ripe corn under the undulating  
 air  
 Undulates like an ocean ;—and the  
 vines  
 Are trembling wide in all their trel-  
 lised lines ;  
 The murmur of the awakening sea  
 doth fill  
 The empty pauses of the blast ;—the  
 hill  
 Looks hoary through the white elec-  
 tric rain [strain  
 And from the glens beyond, in sullen  
 The interrupted thunder howls ; above  
 One chasm of heaven smiles, like the  
 eye of love  
 On the unquiet world ;—while such  
 things are.  
 How could one worth your friendship  
 heed the war  
 Of worms ? The shriek of the world's  
 carrion jays,  
 Their censure, or their wonder, or  
 their praise ?  
 You are not here ! The quaint witch  
 Memory sees  
 In vacant chairs your absent images,  
 And points where once you sat, and  
 now should be,  
 But are not.—I demand if ever we  
 Shall meet as then we met ;—and she  
 replies,  
 Veiling in awe her second-sighted eyes,  
 " I know the past alone—but sum-  
 mon home  
 My sister Hope, she speaks of all to  
 come."  
 But I, an old diviner, who know well  
 Every false verse of that sweet oracle,  
 Turned to the sad enchantress once  
 again,  
 And sought a respite from my gentle  
 pain,  
 In acting every passage o'er and o'er  
 Of our communion.—How on the sea-  
 shore  
 We watched the ocean and the sky  
 together,  
 Under the roof of blue Italian wea-  
 ther ;  
 How I ran home through last year's  
 thunderstorm,

<p>And felt the transverse lightning linger warm Upon my cheek : and how we often made Treats for each other, where good will outweighed [cheer, The frugal luxury of our country As it well might, were it less firm and clear Than ours must ever be ;—and how we spun [sun A shroud of talk to hide us from the Of this familiar life, which seems to be But is not,—or is but quaint mockery Of all we would believe ; or sadly blame The jarring and inexplicable frame Of this wrong world—and then anatomize The purposes and thoughts of men whose eyes Were closed in distant years ;—or widely guess The issue of the earth's great business, When we shall be as we no longer are ; Like babbling gossips safe, who hear the war Of winds, and sigh, but tremble not ; or how You listened to some interrupted flow Of visionary rhyme ;—in joy and pain Struck from the inmost fountains of my brain, With little skill perhaps ;—or how we sought Those deepest wells of passion or of thought Wrought by wise poets in the waste of years, Staining the sacred waters with our tears ; Quenching a thirst ever to be renewed ! Or how I, wisest lady ! then induced The language of a land which now is free, And winged with thoughts of truth and majesty, Flits round the tyrant's sceptre like a cloud, And bursts the peopled prisons, and cries aloud, " My name is Legion ! "—that majestic tongue Which Calderon over the desert flung Of ages and of nations ; and which found</p>	<p>An echo in our hearts, and with the sound Startled oblivion ;—thou wert then to me As is a nurse—when inarticulately A child would talk as its grown parents do. If living winds the rapid clouds pursue, If hawks chase doves through the aërial way, Huntsmen the innocent deer, and beasts their prey, Why should not we rouse with the spirit's blast Out of the forest of the pathless past These recollected pleasures ? You are now In London, that great sea, whose ebb and flow At once is deaf and loud, and on the shore Vomits its wrecks, and still howls on for more. Yet in its depth what treasures ! You will see Your old friend Godwin, greater none than he ; Though fallen on evil times, yet will he stand, Among the spirits of our age and land, Before the dread tribunal of To-come The foremost, whilst rebuke stands pale and dumb. You will see Coleridge ; he who sits obscure In the exceeding lustre and the pure Intense irradiation of a mind, Which, with its own internal lustre blind, Flags wearily through darkness and despair— A cloud-encircled meteor of the air, A hooded eagle among blinking owls. You will see Hunt ; one of those happy souls Which are the salt of the earth, and without whom This world would smell like what it is —a tomb ; Who is, what others seem :—his room no doubt Is still adorned by many a cast from Shout, With graceful flowers, tastefully placed about ;</p>
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And coronals of bay from ribbons hung,  
 And brighter wreaths in neat disorder flung,  
 The gifts of the most learned among  
 some dozens  
 Of female friends, sisters-in-law, and cousins.  
 And there is he with his eternal puns,  
 Which beat the dullest brain for smiles, like duns  
 Thundering for money at a poet's door;  
 Alas! it is no use to say, "I'm poor!"  
 Or oft in graver mood, when he will look  
 Things wiser than were ever said in book,  
 Except in Shakspeare's wisest tenderness.  
 You will see Hogge and I cannot express  
 His virtues though I know that they are great,  
 Because he locks, then barricades, the gate  
 Within which they inhabit;—of his wit,  
 And wisdom, you'll cry out when you are bit.  
 He is a pearl within an oyster-shell,  
 One of the richest of the deep. And there  
 Is English Peacock with his mountain Fair  
 Turned into a Flamingo,—that shy bird  
 That gleams i' the Indian air. Have you not heard  
 When a man marries, dies, or turns Hindoo,  
 His best friends hear no more of him? but you  
 Will see him, and will like him too, I hope,  
 With the milk-white Snowdonian antelope  
 Matched with his camelopard; his fine wit  
 Makes such a wound, the knife is lost in it;  
 A strain too learned for a shallow age,  
 Too wise for selfish bigots;—let his  
 Which charms the chosen spirits of the age,  
 Fold itself up for a serener clime  
 Of years to come, and find its recompense  
 In that just expectation. Wit and sense,  
 Virtue and human knowledge—all that might  
 Make this dull world a business of delight,  
 Are all combined in Horace Smith.—And these,  
 With some exceptions, which I need not tease  
 Your patience by descanting on, are all  
 You and I know in London. I recall  
 My thoughts, and bid you look upon the night  
 As water does a sponge, so the moonlight  
 Fills the void, hollow, universal air.  
 What see you?—Unpavilioned heaven is fair,  
 Whether the moon, into her chamber gone,  
 Leaves midnight to the golden stars, or wan  
 Climbs with diminished beams the azure steep;  
 Or whether clouds sail o'er the inverse deep,  
 Piloted by the many-wandering blast,  
 And the rare stars rush through them, dim and fast.  
 All this is beautiful in every land.  
 But what see you beside? A shabby stand  
 Of hackney-coaches—a brick house or wall  
 Fencing some lonely court, white with the scrawl  
 Of our unhappy politics;—or worse—  
 A wretched woman reeling by, whose curse  
 Mixed with the watchman's, partner of her trade,  
 You must accept in place of serenade—  
 Or yellow-haired Pollonia murmuring  
 To Henry, some unutterable thing.  
 I see a chaos of green leaves and fruit  
 Built round dark caverns, even to the root  
 Of the living stems who feed them; in whose powers

<p>There sleep in their dark dew the fold- ed flowers :</p> <p>Beyond, the surface of the unsickled corn</p> <p>Trembles not in the slumbering air, and borne</p> <p>In circles quaint, and ever-changing dance,</p> <p>Like winged stars the fireflies flash and glance</p> <p>Pale in the open moonshine, but each one</p> <p>Under the dark trees seems a little sun,</p> <p>A meteor tamed ; a fixed star gone astray</p> <p>From the silver regions of the Milky Way.</p> <p>Afar the Contadino's song is heard, Rude, but made sweet by distance ; --and a bird</p> <p>Which cannot be a nightingale, and yet</p> <p>I know none else that sings so sweet as it</p> <p>At this late hour,—and then all is still —</p> <p>Now Italy or London, which you will !</p> <p>Next winter you must pass with me ; I'll have</p> <p>My house by that time turned into a grave</p> <p>Of dead despondence and low- thoughted care,</p> <p>And all the dreams which our tor- menters are</p> <p>Oh ! that Hunt, Hogg, Peacock, and Smith were there,</p> <p>With everything belonging to them fair !—</p> <p>We will have books ; Spanish, Italian, Greek,</p> <p>And ask one week to make another week</p> <p>As like his father, as I'm unlike mine</p> <p>Though we eat little flesh and drink no wine,</p> <p>Yet let's be merry ; we'll have tea and toast ;</p> <p>Custards for supper, and an endless hoast</p> <p>Of syllabubs and jellies, and mince- pies,</p> <p>And other such ladylike luxuries,—</p>	<p>Feasting on which we will philoso- phise.</p> <p>And we'll have fires out of the Grand Duke's wood,</p> <p>To thaw the six weeks' winter in our blood.</p> <p>And then we'll talk ;—what shall we talk about ?</p> <p>Oh ! there are themes enough for many a bout</p> <p>Of thought-entangled descant ; as to nerves—</p> <p>With cones and parallelograms and curves</p> <p>I've sworn to strangle them if once they dare</p> <p>To bother me,—when you are with me there</p> <p>And they shall never more sip lauda- num</p> <p>From Helicon or Himeros<sup>1</sup> ;—well, come,</p> <p>And in spite of * * * and of the devil, We'll make our friendly philosophic revel</p> <p>Outlast the leafless time ;—till buds and flowers</p> <p>Warn the obscure inevitable hours Sweet meeting by sad parting to re- new —</p> <p>" To-morrow to fresh woods and pas- tures new."</p>
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## TO MARY

(ON HER OBJECTING TO THE FOLLOW-  
ING POEM, UPON THE SCORE OF ITS  
CONTAINING NO HUMAN INTEREST)

I

How, my dear Mary, are you critic-  
litten,  
(For vipers kill, though dead,) by  
some review,  
That you condemn these verses I have  
written,  
Because they tell no story, false or  
true !

What though no mice are caught by  
a young kitten  
May it not leap and play as grown  
cats do,

<sup>1</sup> *Ilupoe*, from which the river *Himero* was  
named, is, with some slight shade of difference,  
synonym of Love.

Till its claws come? Prithee, for this  
one time,  
Content thee with a visionary rhyme.

## II

What hand would crush the silken-  
winged fly,  
The youngest of inconstant April's  
minions,  
Because it cannot climb the purest  
sky,  
Where the swan sings, amid the  
sun's dominions?  
Not thine. Thou knowest 'tis its  
doom to die,  
When day shall hide within her twi-  
light pinions,  
The lucent eyes, and the eternal smile,  
Serene as thine, which lent it life  
awhile.

## III

To thy fair feet a winged Vision came,  
Whose date should have been long-  
er than a day,  
And o'er thy head did beat its wings  
for fame,  
And in thy sight its fading plumes  
display;  
The watery bow burned in the even-  
ing flame,  
But the shower fell, the swift Sun  
went his way—  
And that is dead.—O, let me not be-  
lieve  
That anything of mine is fit to live!

## IV

Wordsworth informs us he was nine-  
teen years  
Considering and re-touching Peter  
Bell;  
Watering his laurels with the killing  
tears  
Of slow, dull care, so that their roots  
to hell  
Might pierce, and their wide branches  
blot their spheres  
Of heaven, with dewy leaves and  
flowers; this well  
May be, for Heaven and Earth con-  
spire to foil  
The over-busy gardener's blundering  
toil.

## V

My Witch indeed is not so sweet a  
creature  
As Ruth or Lucy, whom his grace-  
ful praise  
Clothes for our grandsons—but she  
matches Peter,  
Though he took nineteen years, and  
she three days  
In dressing. Light the vest of flow-  
ing metre  
She wears; he, proud as dandy  
with his stays,  
Has hung upon his wiry limbs a dress  
Like King Lear's "looped and win-  
dowed raggedness."

## VI

If you strip Peter, you will see a fel-  
low,  
Scorched by Hell's hyperequatorial  
climate  
Into a kind of a sulphureous yellow:  
A lean mark, hardly fit to fling a  
rhyme at;  
In shape a Scaramouch, in hue  
Othello,  
If you unveil my Witch, no priest  
nor primate  
Can shrive you of that sin,—if sin  
there be  
In love, when it becomes idolatry.

## THE WITCH OF ATLAS

## I

BEFORE those cruel twins, whom at  
one birth  
Incestuous Change bore to her  
father Time,  
Error and Truth, had hunted from the  
earth  
All those bright natures which  
adorned its prime,  
And left us nothing to believe in, worth  
The pains of putting into learned  
rhyme,  
A lady-witch there lived on Atlas'  
mountain  
Within a cavern by a secret fountain.

## II

Her mother was one of the Atlantides:  
The all-beholding Sun had ne'er be-  
holden

In his wide voyage o'er continents and seas

So fair a creature, as she lay enfolden

In the warm shadow of her loveliness ;

He kissed her with his beams, and made all golden

The chamber of grey rock in which she lay—

She, in that dream of joy, dissolved away.

## III

'Tis said, she was first changed into a vapour,

And then into a cloud, such clouds as flit,

Like splendour-winged moths about a taper,

Round the red west when the sun dies in it :

And then into a meteor, such as caper  
On hill-tops when the moon is in a fit ;

Then, into one of those mysterious stars

Which hide themselves between the Earth and Mars.

## IV

Ten times the Mother of the Months had bent

Her bow beside the folding-star, and bidden

With that bright sign the billows to indent

The sea-deserted sand : like children chidden,

At her command they ever came and went :—

Since in that cave a dewy splendour hidden,

Took shape and motion : with the living form

Of this embodied Power, the cave grew warm.

## V

A lovely lady garmented in light

From her own beauty—deep her eyes, as arc

Two openings of unfathomable night  
Seen through a tempest's cloven roof ;—her hair

Dark—the dim brain whirls dizzy with delight,

Picturing her form ;—her soft smiles shone afar,

And her low voice was heard like love, and drew

All living things towards this wonder new.

## VI

And first the spotted camelopard came,

And then the wise and fearless elephant ;

Then the sly serpent, in the golden flame

Of his own volumes interwolved ;—all gaunt

And sanguine beasts her gentle looks made tame.

They drank before her at her sacred fount ;

And every beast of beating heart grew bold,

Such gentleness and power even to behold.

## VII

The brinded lioness led forth her young,

That she might teach them how they should forego

Their inborn thirst of death ; the pard unstrung

His sinews at her feet, and sought to know,

With looks whose motions spoke without a tongue,

How he might be as gentle as the doe.

The magic circle of her voice and eyes  
All savage natures did imparadise.

## VIII

And old Silenus, shaking a green stick  
Of lilies, and the wood-gods in a crew

Came, blithe, as in the olive copses thick

Cicadæ arc, drunk with the noon-day dew ;

And Driope and Faunus followed quick,

Teasing the God to sing them something new,

Till in this cave they found the lady lone,

Sitting upon a seat of emerald stone,

## IX

And universal Pan, 'tis said, was there,  
 And though none saw him,—  
 through the adamant  
 Of the deep mountains, through the  
 trackless air,  
 And through those living spirits,  
 like a want,  
 He passed out of his everlasting lair  
 Where the quick heart of the great  
 world doth pant,  
 And felt that wondrous lady all  
 alone,  
 And she felt him upon her emerald  
 throne.

## X

And every nymph of stream and  
 spreading tree,  
 And every shepherdess of Ocean's  
 flocks,  
 Who drives her white waves over the  
 green sea;  
 And Ocean, with the brine on his  
 grey locks,  
 And quaint Priapus with his com-  
 pany,  
 All came, much wondering how the  
 enwombed rocks  
 Could have brought forth so beauti-  
 ful a birth;—  
 Her love subdued their wonder and  
 their mirth.

## XI

The herdsmen and the mountain  
 maidens came,  
 And the rude kings of pastoral  
 Garamant—  
 Their spirits shook within them, as a  
 flame  
 Stirred by the air under a cavern  
 gaunt:  
 Pigmies, and Polyphemes, by many a  
 name,  
 Centaurs and Satyrs, and such  
 shapes as haunt  
 Wet clefts,—and lumps, neither alive  
 nor dead,  
 Dog-headed, bosom-eyed, and bird-  
 footed.

## XII

For she was beautiful: her beauty  
 made

The bright world dim, and every-  
 thing beside  
 Seemed like the fleeting image of a  
 shade:  
 No thought of living spirit could  
 abide  
 (Which to her looks had ever been be-  
 trayed)  
 On any object in the world so wide,  
 On any hope within the circling skies,  
 But on her form, and in her inmost  
 eyes.

## XIII

Which when the lady knew, she took  
 her spindle  
 And twined three threads of fleecy  
 mist, and three  
 Long lines of light, such as the dawn  
 may kindle  
 The clouds and waves and moun-  
 tains with, and she  
 As many starbeams, ere their lamps  
 could dwindle  
 In the belated moon, wound skil-  
 fully;  
 And with these threads a subtle veil  
 she wove—  
 A shadow for the splendour of her  
 love.

## XIV

The deep recesses of her odorous  
 dwelling  
 Were stored with magic treasures—  
 sounds of air,  
 Which had the power all spirits of  
 compelling,  
 Folded in cells of crystal silence  
 there;  
 Such as we hear in youth, and think  
 the feeling  
 Will never die—yet ere we are  
 aware,  
 The feeling and the sound are fled and  
 gone,  
 And the regret they leave remains  
 alone.

## XV

And there lay visions swift, and sweet,  
 and quaint,  
 Each in its thin sheath like a chry-  
 salis;  
 Some eager to burst forth, some weak  
 and faint



With the soft burthen of intensest bliss  
 It is its work to bear to many a saint  
 Whose heart adores the shrine  
 which holiest is,  
 Even Love's—and others white, green,  
 grey, and black,  
 And of all shapes—and each was at  
 her beck.

## XVI

And odours in a kind of aviary  
 Of ever-blooming Eden trees she  
 kept,  
 Clipt in a floating net, a lovesick  
 Fairy  
 Had woven from dew-beams while  
 the moon yet slept ;  
 As bats at the wired window of a dairy,  
 They beat their vans ; and each  
 was an adept,  
 When loosed and missioned, making  
 wings of winds,  
 To stir sweet thoughts or sad, in des-  
 tined minds.

## XVII

And liquors clear and sweet, whose  
 healthful might  
 Could medicine the sick soul to  
 happy sleep,  
 And change eternal death into a night  
 Of glorious dreams — or if eyes  
 needs must weep  
 Could make their tears all wonder and  
 delight,  
 She in her crystal vials did closely  
 keep :  
 If men could drink of those clear vials,  
 'tis said  
 The living were not envied of the  
 dead.

## XVIII

Her cave was stored with scrolls of  
 strange device,  
 The works of some Saturnian Archi-  
 mage,  
 Which taught the expiations at whose  
 price  
 Men from the Gods might win that  
 happy age  
 Too lightly lost, redeeming native  
 vice ;  
 And which might quench the earth-  
 consuming rage

Of gold and blood—till men should  
 live and move  
 Ha onious as the sacred stars above.

## XIX

And how all things that seem untam-  
 able,  
 'Not to be checked and not to be  
 confined,  
 Obey the spells of wisdom's wizard  
 skill ;  
 Time, Earth and Fire—the Ocean  
 and the Wind,  
 And all their shapes—and man's im-  
 perial will ;  
 And other scrolls whose writings did  
 unbind  
 The inmost lore of Love—let the  
 profane  
 Tremble to ask what secrets they  
 contain.

## XX

And wondrous works of substances  
 unknown,  
 To which the enchantment of her  
 father's power  
 Had changed those ragged blocks of  
 savage stone,  
 Were heaped in the recesses of her  
 bower ;  
 Carved lamps and chalices, and phials  
 which shone  
 In their own golden beams—each  
 like a flower,  
 Out of whose depth a firefly shakes  
 his light  
 Under a cypress in a starless night.

## XXI

At first she lived alone in this wild  
 home,  
 And her thoughts were each a min-  
 ister,  
 Clothing themselves or with the ocean  
 foam,  
 Or with the wind, or with the speed  
 of fire,  
 To work whatever purposes might  
 come  
 Into her mind : such power her  
 mighty Sire  
 Had girt them with, whether to fly or  
 run,  
 Through all the regions which he  
 shines upon.

## XXII

The Ocean nymphs and Hamadryades,  
Oreads and Naiads with long weedy locks,  
Offered to do her bidding through the seas,  
Under the earth, and in the hollow rocks,  
And far beneath the matted roots of trees,  
And in the gnarled heart of stub born oaks,  
So they might live for ever in the light  
Of her sweet presence—each a satellite.

## XXIII

"This may not be," the wizard maid replied;  
"The fountains where the Naiades bedew  
Their shining hair, at length are drained and dried,  
The solid oaks forget their strength, and strew  
Their latest leaf upon the mountains wide;  
The boundless ocean, like a drop of dew  
Will be consumed—the stubborn centre must  
Be scattered, like a cloud of summer dust.

## XXIV

"And ye with them will perish one by one:  
If I must sigh to think that this shall be,  
If I must weep when the surviving Sun  
Shall smile on your decay—Oh, ask not me  
To love you till your little race is run;  
I cannot die as ye must—over me  
Your leaves shall glance—the streams in which ye dwell  
Shall be my paths henceforth, and so farewell!"

## XXV

She spoke and wept: the dark and azure well  
Sparkled beneath the shower of her bright tears,

And every little circlet where they fell,  
Flung to the cavern roof inconstant spheres  
And intertangled lines of light:—a knell  
Of sobbing voices came upon her ears  
From those departing Forms, o'er the serene  
Of the white streams and of the forest green.

## XXVI

All day the wizard lady sat aloof,  
Spelling out scrolls of dread antiquity,  
Under the cavern's fountain-lighted roof;  
Or brooding the pictured poesy  
Of some high tale upon her growing woof,  
Which the sweet splendour of her smiles could dye  
In hues outshining heaven—and ever she  
Added some grace to the wrought poesy.

## XXVII

While on her hearth lay blazing many a piece  
Of sandal wood, rare gums, and cinnamon;  
Men scarcely know how beautiful fire is;  
Each flame of it is as a precious stone  
Dissolved in ever-moving light, and this  
Belongs to each and all who gaze upon.  
The Witch beheld it not, for in her hand  
She held a woof that dimmed the burning brand.

## XXVIII

This lady never slept, but lay in trance  
All night within the fountain—as in sleep.  
Its emerald crags glowed in her beauty's glance:  
Through the green splendour of the water deep  
She saw the constellations reel and dance

Like fireflies—and withal did ever  
keep  
The tenour of her contemplations  
calm,  
With open eyes, closed feet, and  
folded palm.

## XXIX

And when the whirlwinds and the  
clouds descended  
From the white pinnacles of that  
cold hill,  
She passed at dewfall to a space ex-  
tended,  
Where, in a lawn of flowering  
asphodel  
Amid a wood of pines and cedars  
blended,

There yawned an inextinguishable  
well  
Of crimson fire, full even to the brim,  
And overflowing all the margin trim.

## XXX

Within the which she lay when the  
fierce war  
Of wintry winds shook that innocu-  
ous liquor  
In many a mimic moon and bearded  
star,

O'er woods and lawns—the serpent  
heard it flicker  
In sleep, and dreaming still, he crept  
afar

And when the windless snow de-  
scended thick  
Than autumn leaves, she watched it  
as it came  
Melt on the surface of the level flame.

## XXXI

She had a Boat which some say Vul-  
can wrought  
For Venus, as the chariot of her  
star ;

But it was found too feeble to be  
fraught

With all the ardours in that sphere  
which are,

And so she sold it, and Apollo bought  
And gave it to this daughter : from  
a car

Changed to the fairest and the lightest  
boat

Which ever upon mortal stream did  
float.

## XXXII

And others say, that, when but three  
hours old,

The firstborn Love out of his cradle  
leapt,

And clove dun Chaos with his wings of  
gold

And like a horticultural adept,  
Stole a strange seed, and wrapt it up  
in mould,

And sewed it in his mother's star,  
and kept

Watering it all the summer with sweet  
dew,

And with his wings fanning it as it  
grew.

## XXXIII

The plant grew strong and green—the  
snowy flower

Fell, and the long and gourd-like  
fruit began

To turn the light and dew by inward  
power

To its own substance : woven tra-  
cery ran

Of light firm texture, ribbed and  
branching, o'er

The solid rind, like a leaf's veined  
fan,

Of which Love scooped this boat, and  
with soft motion

Piloted it round the circumfluous  
ocean.

## XXXIV

This boat she moored upon her fount,  
and lit

A living spirit within all its frame,  
Breathing the soul of swiftness into it.

Couched on the fountain like a  
panther tame,

One of the twain at Evan's feet that  
sit ;

Or as on Vesta's sceptre a swift  
flame,

Or on blind Homer's heart a winged  
thought,---

In joyous expectation lay the boat.

## XXXV

Then by strange art she kneaded fire  
and snow

Together, tempering the repugnant  
mass

With liquid love—all things together  
 grow  
 Through which the harmony of love  
 can pass ;  
 And a fair Shape out of her hands did  
 flow  
 A living image, which did far sur-  
 pass  
 In beauty that bright shape of vital  
 stone  
 Which drew the heart out of Pygma-  
 lion.

## XXXVI

A sexless thing it was, and in its  
 growth  
 It seemed to have developed no  
 defect  
 Of either sex, yet all the grace of  
 both,—  
 In gentleness and strength its limbs  
 were decked ;  
 The bosom lightly swelled with its full  
 youth,  
 The countenance was such as might  
 select  
 Some artist that his skill should never  
 die,  
 Imaging forth such perfect purity.

## XXXVII

From its smooth shoulders hung two  
 rapid wings,  
 Fit to have borne it to the seventh  
 sphere,  
 Tipt with the speed of liquid light-  
 enings,  
 Dyed in the ardours of the atmo-  
 sphere :  
 She led her creature to the boiling  
 springs  
 Where the light boat was moored,  
 and said—" Sit here !"  
 And pointed to the prow, and took  
 her seat  
 Beside the rudder with opposing feet.

## XXXVIII

And down the streams which clove  
 those mountains vast  
 Around their inland islets, and amid  
 The panther-peopled forests, whose  
 shade cast  
 Darkness and odours, and a plea-  
 sure hid

In melancholy gloom, the pinnacle  
 passed ;  
 By many a star-surrounded pyra-  
 mid  
 Of icy crag cleaving the purple sky,  
 And caverns yawning round un-  
 fathomably.

## XXXIX

The silver moon into that winding  
 dell,  
 With slanted gleam athwart the  
 forest tops,  
 Tempered like golden evening, feebly  
 fell ;  
 A green and glowing light, like that  
 which drops  
 From folded lilies in which glow-  
 worms dwell,  
 When earth over her face night's  
 mantle wraps ;  
 Between the severed mountains lay,  
 on high  
 Over the stream, a narrow rift of sky.

## XL

And ever as she went, the Image lay  
 With folded wings and unawakened  
 eyes ;  
 And o'er its gentle countenance did  
 play  
 The busy dreams, as thick as sum-  
 mer flies  
 Chasing the rapid smiles that would  
 not stay,  
 And drinking the warm tears, and  
 the sweet sighs  
 Inhaling, which, with busy murmur  
 vain,  
 They had aroused from that full heart  
 and brain.

## XLI

And ever down the prone vale, like a  
 cloud  
 Upon a stream of wind, the pin-  
 nace went :  
 Now lingering on the pools, in which  
 abode  
 The calm and darkness of the deep,  
 content  
 In which they paused ; now o'er the  
 shallow road  
 Of white and dancing waters, all  
 besprent

With sand and polished pebbles :—  
mortal boat  
In such a shallow rapid could not  
float.

## XLI

And down the earthquaking cata-  
racts, which shiver  
Their snowlike waters into golden  
air,  
Or under chasms unfathomable ever  
Sepulchre them, till in their rage  
they tear  
A subterranean portal for the river,  
It fled—the circling sunbows did  
upbear  
Its fall down the hoar precipice of  
spray,  
Lighting it far upon its lampless way.

## XLII

And when the wizard lady would  
ascend  
The labyrinths of some many-wind-  
ing vale,  
Which to the inmost mountain up-  
ward tend—  
She called "Hermaphroditus!"  
and the pale  
And heavy hue which slumber could  
extend  
Over its lips and eyes, as on the gale  
A rapid shadow from a slope of grass,  
Into the darkness of the stream did  
pass.

## XLIV

And it unfurled its heaven-coloured  
pinions;  
With stars of fire spotting the  
stream below  
And from above into the Sun's  
dominions  
Flinging a glory, like the golden  
glow  
In which spring clothes her emerald-  
winged minions,  
All interwoven with fine feathery  
snow  
And moonlight splendour of intensest  
rime,  
With which frost paints the pines in  
winter time.

## XLV

And then it winnowed the Elysian  
air  
Which ever hung about that lady  
bright,  
With its ethereal vans—and speeding  
there,  
Like a star up the torrent of the  
night,  
Or a swift eagle in the morning glare  
Breasting the whirlwind with im-  
petuous flight,  
The pinnacle, oared by those en-  
chanted wings,  
Clove the fierce streams towards their  
upper springs.

## XLVI

The water flashed like sunlight by the  
prow  
Of a noon-wandering meteor flung  
to Heaven;  
The still air seemed as if its waves did  
flow  
In tempest down the mountains,—  
loosely driven  
The lady's radiant hair streamed to  
and fro;  
Beneath, the billows having vainly  
striven  
Indignant and impetuous, roared to  
feel  
The swift and steady motion of the  
keel.

## XLVII

Or, when the weary moon was in the  
wane,  
Or in the noon of interlunar night,  
The lady-witch in visions could not  
chain  
Her spirit; but sailed forth under  
the light  
Of shooting stars, and bade extend  
amain  
His storm outspeeding wings, th'  
Hermaphrodite;  
She to the Austral waters took her  
way,  
Beyond the fabulous Thamondocona.

## XLVIII

Where, like a meadow which no pythe  
has shaven,

Which rain could never bend, or  
whirl-blast shake,  
With the Antarctic constellations  
paven,  
Canopus and his crew, lay th' Aus-  
tral lake—  
There she would build herself a wind-  
less haven  
Out of the clouds whose moving  
turrets make  
The bastions of the storm, when  
through the sky  
The spirits of the tempest thundered  
by.

## XLIX

A haven, beneath whose translucent  
floor  
The tremulous stars sparkled un-  
fathomably,  
And around which the solid vapours  
hoar,  
Based on the level waters, to the  
sky  
Lifted their dreadful crags; and like  
a shore  
Of wintry mountains, inaccessibly  
Hemmed in with rifts and precipices  
grey  
And hanging crags, many a cove and  
bay.

## L

And whilst the outer lake beneath the  
lash  
Of the wind's scourge, foamed like  
a wounded thing  
And the incessant hail with stony  
clash  
Ploughed up the waters, and the  
flagging wing  
Of the roused cormorant in the light-  
ning flash  
Looked like the wreck of some wind-  
wandering  
Fragment of inky thunder-smoke—  
this haven  
Was as a gem to copy Heaven en-  
graven.

## LI

On which that lady played her many  
pranks,  
Circling the image of a shooting  
star,  
Even as a tiger on Hydaspes' banks,

Outspeeds the antelopes which  
speediest are.  
In her light boat; and many quips  
and cranks  
She played upon the water; till the  
car  
Of the late moon, like a sick matron  
wan,  
To journey from the misty east  
began.

## LII

And then she called out of the hollow  
turrets  
Of those high clouds, white, golden,  
and vermillion,  
The armies of her ministering  
spirits—  
In mighty legions million after mil-  
lion  
They came, each troop emblazoning  
its merits  
On meteor flags; and many a proud  
pavilion,  
Of the intertexture of the atmosphere,  
They pitched upon the plain\* of the  
calm mere.

## LIII

They framed the imperial tent of their  
great queen  
Of woven exhalations, underlaid  
With lambent lightning-fire, as may  
be seen  
A dome of thin and open ivory in-  
laid  
With crimson silk—cressets from the  
serene  
Hung there, and on the water for  
her tread,  
A tapestry of fleece-like mist was  
strewn,  
Dyed in the beams of the ascending  
moon.

## LIV

And on a throne o'erlaid with star-  
light, caught  
Upon those wandering isles of æry  
dew,  
Which highest shoals of mountain  
shipwreck not,  
She sate, and heard all that had  
happened new  
Between the earth and moon since  
they had brought

The last intelligence—and now she  
grew  
Pale as that moon, lost in the watery  
night—  
And now she wept, and now she  
laughed outright.

## LV

These were tame pleasures.—She  
would often climb  
The steepest ladder of the crudded  
rack  
Up to some beaked cape of cloud sub-  
lime,  
And like Arion on the dolphin's  
back  
Ride singing through the shoreless air.  
Oft time  
Following the serpent lightning's  
winding track,  
She ran upon the platforms of the  
wind,  
And laughed to hear the fireballs  
roar behind.

## LVI

And sometimes to those streams of  
upper air,  
Which whirl the earth in its diurnal  
round,  
She would ascend, and win the spirits  
there  
To let her join their chorus. Mor-  
tals found  
That on those days the sky was calm  
and fair,  
And mystic snatches of harmonious  
sound  
Wandered upon the earth where'er  
she passed,  
And happy thoughts of hope, too  
sweet to last.

## LVII

But her choice sport was, in the hour  
of sleep,  
To glide adown old Nilus, when he  
threads  
Egypt and Æthiopia, from the steep  
Of utmost Axumé, until he spreads  
Like a calm flock of silver-fleece'd  
sheep,  
His waters on the plain: and  
crested heads  
Of cities and proud temples gleam  
amid,  
And many a vapour-belted pyramid.

## LVIII

By Mœris and the Mareotid lakes,  
Strewn with faint blooms like  
bridal-chamber floors;  
Where naked boys bridling tame  
water-snakes,  
Or charioteering ghastly alligators,  
Had left on the sweet waters mighty  
wakes  
Of those huge forms:—within the  
brazen doors  
Of the great Labyrinth slept both boy  
and beast,  
Tired with the pomp of their Osirian  
feast.

## LIX

And where within the surface of the  
river  
The shadows of the massy temples  
lie,  
And never are erased—but tremble  
ever  
Like things which every cloud can  
doom to die,  
Through lotus-pav'n canals, and  
wheresoever  
The works of man pierced that  
serenest sky  
With tombs, and towers, and fane,  
'twas her delight  
To wander in the shadow of the  
night.

## LX

With motion like the spirit of that  
wind  
Whose soft step deepens slumber,  
her light feet  
Passed through the peopled haunts of  
humankind,  
Scattering sweet visions from her  
presence sweet,  
Through fane and palace-court and  
labyrinth mined  
With many a dark and subterranean  
street  
Under the Nile; through chambers  
high and deep  
She passed, observing mortals in their  
sleep.

## LXI

A pleasure sweet doubtless it was to  
see

Mortals subdued in all the shapes  
of sleep.

Here lay two sister-twins in infancy ;  
There a lone youth who in his  
dreams did weep ;

Within, two lovers linked innocently  
In their loose locks which over both  
did creep

Like ivy from one stem ;—and there  
lay calm,

Old age with snow-bright hair and  
folded palm.

## LXII

But other troubled forms of sleep  
she saw,

Not to be mirrored in a holy song,  
Distortions foul of supernatural awe,  
And pale imaginings of visioned  
wrong,

And all the code of custom's lawless  
law

Written upon the brows of old and  
young :

" This," said the wizard maiden, " is  
the strife

Which stirs the liquid surface of  
man's life."

## LXIII

And little did the sight disturb her  
soul—

We, the weak mariners of that wide  
lake,

Where'er its shores extend or billows  
roll,

Our course unpiloted and starless  
make

O'er its wide surface to an unknown  
goal,—

But she in the calm depths her way  
could take,

Where in bright bowers immortal  
forms abide,

Beneath the weltering of the restless  
tide.

## LXIV

And she saw princes couched under  
the glow

Of sunlike gems ; and round each  
temple-court

In dormitories ranged, row after row,  
She saw the priests asleep,—all of  
one sort,

For all were educated to be so.

S.P.

The peasants in their huts, and in  
the port

The sailors she saw cradled on the  
waves,

And the dead lulled within their  
dreamless graves.

## LXV

And all the forms in which those  
spirits lay,

Were to her sight like the diaphan-  
ous

Veils, in which those sweet ladies oft  
array

Their delicate limbs, who would  
conceal from us

Only their scorn of all concealment :  
they

Move in the light of their own  
beauty thus.

But these and all now lay with sleep  
upon them,

And little thought a Witch was look-  
ing on them.

## LXVI

She all those human figures breathing  
there

Beheld as living spirits—to her  
eyes

The naked beauty of the soul lay  
bare,

And often through a rude and worn  
disguise

She saw the inner form most bright  
and fair—

And then,—she had a charm of  
strange device,

Which, murmured on mute lips with  
tender tone,

Could make that spirit mingle with  
her own.

## LXVII

Alas, Aurora ! what wouldst thou  
have given

For such a charm, when Tithon  
became grey ?

Or how much, Venus, of thy silver  
heaven

Wouldst thou have yielded, ere  
Proserpina

Had half (oh ! why not all ?) the debt  
forgiven

Which dear Adonis had been  
doomed to pay,

D.D.



To any witch who would have taught  
you it ?  
The Heliad doth not know its value  
yet.

## LXVIII

'Tis said in after times her spirit free  
Knew what love was, and felt itself  
alone—  
But holy Dian could not chaster be  
Before she stooped to kiss Endymion,  
Than now this lady—like a sexless bee  
Tasting all blossoms, and confined  
to none—  
Among those mortal forms, the wizard  
maiden  
Passed with an eye serene and heart  
unladen.

## LXIX

To those she saw most beautiful, she  
gave  
Strange panacea in a crystal bowl.  
They drank in their deep sleep of that  
sweet wave,  
And lived thenceforth as if some control,  
Mightier than life, were in them ; and  
the grave  
Of such, when death oppressed the  
weary soul.  
Was a green and over-arching bower  
Lit by the gems of many a starry  
flower.

## LXX

For on the night that they were  
buried, she  
Restored the embalmers' ruining,  
and shook  
The light out of the funeral lamps,  
to be  
A mimic day within that deathly  
nook ;  
And she unwound the woven imagery  
Of second childhood's swaddling  
bands, and took  
The coffin, its last cradle, from its  
niche,  
And threw it with contempt into a  
ditch.

## LXXI

And there the body lay, age after  
age,

Mute, breathing, beating, warm,  
and undecaying, "  
Like one asleep in a green hermitage,  
With gentle sleep about its eyelids  
playing,  
And living in its dreams beyond the  
rage  
Of death or life ; while they were  
still arraying  
In liveries ever new the rapid, blind,  
And fleeting generations of mankind.

## LXXII

And she would write strange dreams  
upon the brain  
Of those who were less beautiful,  
and make  
All harsh and crooked purposes more  
vain  
Than in the desert is the serpent's  
wake  
Which the sand covers,—all his evil  
gain  
The miser in such dreams would  
rise and shake  
Into a beggar's lap ; —the lying scribe  
Would his own lies betray without a  
bribe.

## LXXIII

The priests would write an explanation  
full,  
Translating hieroglyphics into  
Greek,  
How the god Apis really was a bull,  
And nothing more ; and bid the  
herald stick  
The same against the temple doors,  
and pull  
The old cant down ; they licensed  
all to speak  
Whatever they thought of hawks, and  
cats, and geese,  
By pastoral letters to each diocese.

## LXXIV

The king would dress an ape up in his  
crown  
And robes, and seat him on his  
glorious seat,  
And on the right hand of the sunlike  
throne  
Would place a gaudy mock-bird to  
repeat  
The chatterings of the monkey.—  
Every one

Of the prone courtiers crawled to  
kiss the feet  
Of their great Emperor when the  
morning came ;  
And kissed—alas, how many kiss the  
same !

## LXXV

The soldiers dreamed that they were  
blacksmiths, and  
Walked out of quarters in somnam-  
bulism,  
Round the red anvils you might see  
them stand  
Like Cyclopes in Vulcan's sooty  
abysm,  
Beating their swords to ploughshares ;  
—in a band  
The gaolers sent those of the liberal  
schism  
Free through the streets of Memphis ;  
much, I wis,  
To the annoyance of king Amasis.

## LXXVI

And timid lovers who had been so  
coy,  
They hardly knew whether they  
loved or not,  
Would rise out of their rest, and take  
sweet joy,  
To the fulfilment of their inmost  
thought ;  
And when next day the maiden and  
the boy  
Met one another, both, like sinners  
caught,  
Blushed at the thing which each be-  
lieved was done  
Only in fancy—till the tenth moon  
shone ;

## • LXXVII

And then the Witch would let them  
take no ill :  
Of many thousand schemes which  
lovers find  
The Witch found one,—and so they  
took their fill  
Of happiness in marriage warm and  
kind.  
Friends who, by practice of some en-  
vious skill,  
Were torn apart, a wide wound,  
mind from mind !

She did unite again with visions clear  
Of deep affection and of truth sincere.

## LXXVIII

These were the pranks she played  
among the cities  
Of mortal men, and what she did  
to sprites  
And Gods, entangling them in her  
sweet ditties,  
To do her will, and show their  
subtle slights,  
I will declare another time ; for it is  
A tale more fit for the weird winter  
nights—  
Than for these garish summer days,  
when we  
Scarcely believe much more than we  
can see.

## DEATH

DEATH is here, and death is there  
Death is busy everywhere,  
All around, within, beneath,  
Above is death—and we are death.

Death has set his mark and seal  
On all we are and all we feel,  
On all we know and all we fear,

\* \* \* \*

First our pleasures die—and then  
Our hopes, and then our fears—and  
when

These are dead, the debt is due,  
Dust claims dust—and we die too.

All things that we love and cherish,  
Like ourselves, must fade and perish ;  
Such is our rude mortal lot—  
Love itself would, did they not, ?

## TO THE MOON

ART thou pale for weariness  
Of climbing heaven, and gazing on  
the earth,  
Wandering companionless  
Among the stars that have a differ-  
ent birth,—  
And ever-changing, like a joyless eye  
That finds no object worth its con-  
stancy ?

ODE TO NAPLES <sup>1</sup>

## EPODE I. a.

*I stood within the city disinterred ;<sup>2</sup>  
 And heard the autumnal leaves like  
 light footfalls  
 Of spirits passing through the streets ;  
 and heard  
 The Mountain's slumberous voice  
 at intervals  
 Thrill through those roofless  
 halls ;  
 The oracular thunder penetrating  
 shook  
 The listening soul in my suspended  
 blood ;  
 I felt that Earth out of her deep heart  
 spoke—  
 I felt, but heard not :—through  
 white columns glowed  
 The isle-sustaining Ocean flood,  
 A plane of light between two heavens  
 of azure :  
 Around me gleamed many a bright  
 sepulchre  
 Of whose pure beauty, Time, as if his  
 pleasure  
 Were to spare Death, had never  
 made erasure ;  
 But every living lineament was  
 clear  
 As in the sculptor's thought ;  
 and there  
 The wreaths of stony myrtle, ivy and  
 pine,  
 Like winter leaves o'ergrown by  
 moulded snow,  
 Seemed only not to move and grow  
 Because the crystal silence of the  
 air  
 Weighed on their life ; even as the  
 Power divine,  
 Which then lulled all things, brooded  
 upon mine.*

<sup>1</sup> The Author has connected many recollections of his visit to Pompeii and Baia with the enthusiasm excited by the intelligence of the proclamation of a Constitutional Government at Naples. This has given a tinge of picturesque and descriptive imagery to the introductory Epodes, which depict the scenes and some of the majestic feelings permanently connected with the scene of this animating event.—*Author's note.*

<sup>2</sup> Pompeii.

## EPODE II. a.

*Then gentle winds arose,  
 With many a mingled close  
 Of wild Æolian sound and mountain  
 odour keen ;  
 And where the Baian ocean  
 Welters with air-like motion,  
 Within, above, around its bowers of  
 starry green,  
 Moving the sea-flowers in those  
 purple caves,  
 Even as the ever stormless 'atmo  
 sphere  
 Floats o'er the Elysian realm,  
 It bore me (like an Angel, o'er the  
 waves  
 Of sunlight, whose swift pinnace of  
 dewy air  
 No storm can overwhelm ;)  
 I sailed where ever flows  
 Under the calm Serene  
 A spirit of deep emotion,  
 From the unknown graves  
 Of the dead kings of Melody.<sup>3</sup>  
 Shadowy Aornos darkened o'er the  
 helm  
 The horizontal ether ; heaven stript  
 bare  
 Its depths over Elysium, where the  
 prow  
 Made the invisible water white as  
 snow ;  
 From that Typhæan mount, Inarimé,  
 There streamed a sunlit vapour, like  
 the standard  
 Of some ethereal host ;  
 Whilst from all the coast,  
 Louder and louder, gathering round,  
 there wandered  
 Over the oracular woods and divine  
 sea  
 Propheysings which grew articulate—  
 They seize me—I must speak them ;  
 —be they fate !*

## STROPHE a. i.

*NAPLES ! thou Heart of men, which  
 ever pantest  
 Naked, beneath the lidless eye of  
 heaven !  
 Elysian City, which to calm enchant-  
 est  
 The mutinous air and sea ! They  
 round thee, even  
 As sleep round Love, are driven !  
 Metropolis of a ruined Paradise*

<sup>3</sup> Homer and Virgil.

Long lost, late won, and yet but  
half regained !  
Bright Altar of the bloodless sacri-  
fice,

Which armed Victory offers up  
unstained  
To Love, the flower-enchained !  
Thou which wert once, and then didst  
cease to be,  
Now art, and henceforth ever shall be,  
free,

If Hope, and Truth, and Justice  
can avail.  
Hail, hail, all hail !

STROPHE  $\beta$ . 2.

Thou youngest giant birth,  
Which from the groaning earth  
Leap'st, clothed in armour of impene-  
trable scale !

Last of the Intercessors  
Who 'gainst the Crowned Trans-  
gressors  
Pleaded before God's love ! Arrayed  
in Wisdom's mail,

Wave thy lightning lance in  
mirth ;  
Nor let thy high heart fail,  
Though from their hundred gates the  
leagued Oppressors,  
With hurried legions move ! Hail,  
hail, all hail !

ANTISTROPHE  $\alpha$ . 1.

What though Cimmerian Anarch  
dare blaspheme  
Freedom and thee ? Thy shield is as  
a mirror

To make their blind slaves see, and  
with fierce gleam  
To turn his hungry sword upon the  
wearer ;

A new Actæon's error  
Shall theirs have been—devoured by  
their own hounds !

Be thou like the imperial Basilisk,  
Killing thy foe with unapparent  
wounds !

Gaze on oppression, till, at that  
dread risk

Aghast, she pass from the Earth's  
disk ;

Fear not, but gaze—for freemen  
mightier grow,

And slaves more feeble, gazing on  
their foe.

If Hope, and Truth, and Justice  
may avail,  
Thou shalt be great.—All hail !

ANTISTROPHE  $\beta$ . 2.

From Freedom's form divine,  
From Nature's inmost shrine.  
Strip every impious gawd, rend error  
veil by veil :

O'er ruin desolate,  
O'er Falsehood's fallen state,  
Sit thou sublime, unawed ; be the  
Destroyer pale !

And equal laws be thine, \*  
And winged words let sail,  
Freighted with truth even from the  
throne of God  
That wealth, surviving fate, be thine.  
—All hail !

ANTISTROPHE  $\alpha$ . 7.

Didst thou not start to hear Spain's  
thrilling pean  
From land to land re-echoed sol-  
emnly,

Till silence became music ? From  
the Ææan<sup>1</sup>

To the cold Alps, eternal Italy  
Starts to hear thine ! The Sea  
Which paves the desert streets of Ven-  
ice, laughs

In light and music ; widowed Genoa  
wan,

By moonlight spells ancestral epi-  
taphs,

Murmuring, where is Doria ? fair  
Milan,

Within whose veins long ran  
The viper's<sup>2</sup> palsyng venom, lifts  
her heel

To bruise his head. The signal and  
the seal

(If Hope, and Truth, and Justice  
can avail)

Art thou of all these hopes.—O  
hail !

ANTISTROPHE  $\beta$ . 7.

Florence ! beneath the sun,  
Of cities fairest one,  
Blushes within her bower for Free-  
dom's expectation :

<sup>1</sup> Ææa, the Island of Circe.

<sup>2</sup> The viper was the armorial device of the Visconti, tyrants of Milan.

From eyes of quenchless hope  
 Rome tears the priestly cope,  
 As ruling once by power, so now by  
 admiration,—  
 An athlete stript to run  
 From a remoter station  
 For the high prize lost on Philippi's  
 shore :—  
 As then Hope, Truth, and Justice  
 did avail,  
 So now may Fraud and Wrong !  
 O hail !

EPODE I. *β.*

Hear ye the march as of the Earth-  
 born Forms  
 Arrayed against the ever-living  
 Gods ?  
 The crash and darkness of a thousand  
 storms  
 Bursting their inaccessible abodes  
 Of crags and thunder clouds ?  
 See ye the banners blazoned to the  
 day,  
 Inwrought with emblems of bar-  
 baric pride ?  
 Dissonant threats kill Silence far  
 away,  
 The Serene Heaven which wraps  
 our Eden wide  
 With iron light is dyed,  
 The Anarchs of the North lead forth  
 their legions  
 Like Chaos o'er creation, un-  
 creating ;  
 An hundred tribes nourished on  
 strange religions  
 And lawless slaveries,—down the  
 aerial regions  
 Of the white Alps, desolating,  
 Famished wolves that bide no  
 waiting,  
 Blotting the glowing footsteps of old  
 glory,  
 Trampling our columned cities into  
 dust,  
 Their dull and savage lust  
 On Beauty's corse to sickness sati-  
 ating—  
 They come ! The fields they tread  
 look black and hoary  
 With fire—from their red feet the  
 streams run gory !

EPODE II. *β.*

Great Spirit, deepest Love !  
 Which rulest and dost move

All things which live and are, within  
 the Italian shore ;  
 Who spreadest heaven around it,  
 Whose woods, rocks, waves, sur-  
 round it ;  
 Who sittest in thy star, o'er Occan's  
 western floor,  
 Spirit of beauty ! at whose soft  
 command  
 The sunbeams and the showers distil  
 its foison !  
 From the Earth's bosom chill ;  
 O bid those beams be each a blind-  
 ing brand  
 Of lightning ! bid those showers be  
 dews of poison !  
 Bid the Earth's plenty kill !  
 Bid thy bright Heaven above  
 Whilst light and darkness bound  
 it,  
 Be their tomb who planned  
 To make it ours and thine !  
 Or, with thine harmonizing ardours  
 fill  
 And raise thy sons, as o'er the prone  
 horizon  
 Thy lamp feeds every twilight wave  
 with fire—  
 Be man's high hope and unextinct  
 desire  
 The instrument to work thy will  
 divine !  
 Then clouds from sunbeams, ante-  
 lopes from leopards  
 And frowns and fears from Thee,  
 Would not more swiftly flee,  
 Than Celtic wolves from the Ausonian  
 shepherds.—  
 Whatever, Spirit, from thy starry  
 shrine  
 Thou yieldest or withholdest, Oh !  
 let be  
 This City of thy worship, ever  
 free !

## SUMMER AND WINTER

It was a bright and cheerful after-  
 noon,  
 Towards the end of the sunny month  
 of June,  
 When the north wind congregates in  
 crowds  
 The floating mountains of the silver  
 clouds

From the horizon—and the stainless  
sky  
Opens beyond them like eternity.  
All things rejoiced beneath the sun,  
the weeds,  
The river, and the cornfields, and  
the reeds;  
The willow leaves that glanced in the  
light breeze,  
And the firm foliage of the larger  
trees.

It was a winter such as when birds die  
In the deep forests; and the fishes lie  
Stiffened in the translucent ice, which  
makes  
Even the mud and slime of the warm  
lakes  
A wrinkled clod, as hard as brick;  
and when,  
Among their children, comfortable  
men  
Gather about great fires, and yet feel  
cold:  
Alas! then for the homeless beggar  
old!

#### LINES TO A REVIEWER

ALAS! good friend, what profit can  
you see  
In hating such a hateless thing as me?  
There is no sport in hate where all the  
rage  
Is on one side. In vain would you  
assuage  
Your frowns upon an unresisting  
smile,  
In which not even contempt lurks, to  
beguile  
Your heart, by some faint sympathy  
of hate.  
Oh! conquer what you cannot satiate!  
For to your passion I am far more coy  
Than ever yet was coldest maid or  
boy  
In winter noon. Of your antipathy  
If I am the Narcissus you are free  
To pine into a sound with hating me.

#### AUTUMN

##### A DIRGE

The warm sun is failing, the bleak  
wind is wailing,

The bare boughs are sighing, the pale  
flowers are dying,  
And the year  
On the earth her deathbed, in a  
shroud of leaves dead,  
Is lying;  
Come, months, come away,  
From November to May,  
In your saddest array;  
Follow the bier  
Of the dead cold year,  
And like dim shadows watch by her  
sepulchre.

The chill rain is falling, the nipt worm  
is crawling,  
The rivers are swelling, the thunder  
is knelling  
For the year;  
The blithe swallows are flown, and the  
lizards each gone  
To his dwelling;  
Come, months, come away;  
Put on white, black, and grey,  
Let your light sisters play—  
Ye, follow the bier  
Of the dead cold year,  
And make her grave green with tear  
on tear.

#### THE WORLD'S WANDERERS

TELL me, thou star, whose wings of  
light  
Speed thee in thy fiery flight,  
In what cavern of the night  
Will thy pinions close now?  
Tell me, moon, thou pale and grey  
Pilgrim of heaven's homeless way,  
In what depth of night or day  
Seekest thou repose now?

Weary wind, who wanderest  
Like the world's rejected guest,  
Hast thou still some secret nest  
On the tree or billow?

#### LIBERTY

The fiery mountains answer each  
other;  
Their thunderings are echoed from  
zone to zone;  
The tempestuous oceans awake one  
another,

And the ice-rocks are shaken round  
winter's throne,  
When the clarion of the Typhoon is  
blown.

From a single cloud the lightning  
flashes,  
Whilst a thousand isles are illumined  
around ;  
Earthquake is trampling one city to  
ashes,  
An hundred are shuddering and tot-  
tering ; the sound  
Is bellowing underground.

But keener thy gaze than the light-  
ning's glare,  
And swifter thy step than the earth-  
quake's tramp ;  
Thou deafenest the rage of the ocean ;  
thy stare  
Makes blind the volcanoes ; the sun's  
bright lamp  
To thine is a fen-fire damp.

From billow and mountain and  
exhaustion  
The sunlight is darted through va-  
pour and blast ;  
From spirit to spirit, from nation to  
nation,  
From city to hamlet, thy dawning is  
cast,—  
And tyrants and slaves are like sha-  
dows of night  
In the van of the morning light.

#### AN ALLEGORY

A PORTAL as of shadowy adamant  
Stands yawning on the highway of  
the life  
Which we all tread, a cavern huge  
and gaunt ;  
Around it rages an unceasing strife  
Of shadows, like the restless clouds  
that haunt  
The gap of some cleft mountain, lifted  
high  
Into the whirlwinds of the upper sky.  
And many passed it by with careless  
tread,  
Not knowing that a shadowy  
[                    ]  
Tracks every traveller even to where  
the dead

Wait peacefully for their com-  
panion new ;  
But others, by more curious humour  
led,  
Pause to examine,—these are very  
few,  
And they learn little there, except to  
know  
That shadows follow them where'er  
they go.

#### THE TOWER OF FAMINE<sup>1</sup>

AMID the desolation of a city,  
Which was the cradle, and is now the  
grave,  
Of an extinguished people ; so that  
pity  
Weeps o'er the shipwrecks of obli-  
vion's wave,  
There stands the Tower of Famine.  
It is built  
Upon some prison-homes, whose  
dwellers rave  
For bread, and gold, and blood : pain,  
linked to guilt,  
Agitates the light flame of their hours,  
Until its vital oil is spent or spilt :  
There stands the pile, a tower amid  
the towers  
And sacred domes ; each marble-  
ribbed roof,  
The brazen-gated temples, and the  
bowers  
Of solitary wealth ! the tempest-proof  
Pavilions of the dark Italian air  
Are by its presence dimmed—they  
stand aloof,  
And are withdrawn—so that the  
world is bare,  
As if a spectre, wrapt in shapeless  
terror,  
Amid a company of ladies fair  
Should glide and glow, till it became  
a mirror  
Of all their beauty, and their hair and  
hue,  
The life of their sweet eyes, with all  
its error,  
Should be absorbed, till they to  
marble grew.

<sup>1</sup> At Fisa there still exists the prison of Ugo-  
lino, which goes by the name of "La Torre della  
Fame": in the adjoining building the galley-  
slaves are confined. It is situated near the  
Ponte al Mare on the Arno.

## SONNET

YE hasten to the dead ! What seek  
ye there,  
Ye restless thoughts and busy pur-  
poses  
Of the idle brain, which the world's  
lively wear ?  
O thou quick Heart, which pantest to  
possess  
All that anticipation feigneth fair !  
Thou vainly curious Mind which  
wouldst guess  
Whence thou didst come, and  
whither thou mayest go,  
And that which never yet was known  
wouldst know— press  
Oh, whither hasten ye, that thus ye  
With such swift feet life's green and  
pleasant path,  
Seeking alike from happiness and woe  
A refuge in the cavern of grey death ?  
O heart, and mind, and thoughts !  
What thing do you  
Hope to inherit in the grave below ?

## TIME LONG PAST

LIKE the ghost of a dear friend dead  
Is time long past.  
A tone which is now forever fled,  
A hope which is now forever past,  
A lover so sweet it could not last,  
Was time long past.

There were sweet dreams in the night  
Of time long past :  
And, was it sadness or delight,  
Each day a shadow onward cast  
Which made us wish it yet might  
last—  
That time long past.

There is regret, almost remorse,  
For time long past.  
'Tis like a child's beloved corse  
A father watches, till at last  
Beauty is like remembrance cast  
From time long past.

## POEMS WRITTEN IN 1821

## EPIPSYCHIDION :

VERSES ADDRESSED TO THE NOBLE  
AND UNFORTUNATE  
LADY EMILIA VIVIANI,  
NOW IMPRISONED IN THE CONVENT  
OF ST. ANNE, PISA

“L'anima amante si slancia furio del  
creato, e si crea nel infinito un Mondo  
tutto per essa, diverso assai da questo  
oscuro e pauroso baratro.”—*Her own  
words.*

My Song, I fear that thou wilt find but  
few  
Who fitly shall conceive thy reasoning,  
Of such hard matter dost thou entertain ;  
Whence, if by misadventure, chance  
should bring  
Thee to base company (as chance may do),  
Quite unaware of what thou dost contain,  
I prithee comfort thy sweet self again,  
My last delight ! tell them that they are  
dull,  
\* And bid them own that thou art beauti-  
ful.

## ADVERTISEMENT

THE writer of the following lines died  
at Florence, as he was preparing for a  
voyage to one of the wildest of the  
Sporades, which he had bought, and  
where he had fitted up the ruins of an  
old building, and where it was his  
hope to have realised a scheme of life,  
suited perhaps to that happier and  
better world of which he is now an  
inhabitant, but hardly practicable in  
this. His life was singular ; less on  
account of the romantic vicissitudes  
which diversified it, than the ideal  
tinge which it received from his own  
character and feelings. The present  
Poem, like the “Vita Nuova” of Dante,  
is sufficiently intelligible to a certain  
class of readers without a matter-of-  
fact history of the circumstances to  
which it relates ; and to a certain  
other class it must ever remain in-  
comprehensible, from a defect of a



common organ of perception for the ideas of which it treats. Not but that, *gran vergogna sarebbe a colui, che rimasse cosa sotto veste di figura, o di colore rettorico; e domandato non sapesse denudare le sue parole da cotai veste, in guisa che avessero verace intendimento.*

The present poem appears to have been intended by the writer as the dedication to some longer one. The stanza on the preceding page is almost a literal translation from Dante's famous canzone

*Voi ch' intendendo, il terzo ciel movete,*  
etc.

The presumptuous application of the concluding lines to his own composition will raise a smile at the expense of my unfortunate friend: be it a smile not of contempt, but pity.

S.

#### EPIPSYCHIDION

SWEET Spirit! Sister of that orphan one,  
Whose empire is the name thou weep-  
est on  
In my heart's temple I suspend to  
thee  
These votive wreaths of withered  
memory.

Poor captive bird! who, from thy  
narrow cage,  
Pourest such music, that it might  
assuage  
The rugged hearts of those who pris-  
oned thee,  
Were they not deaf to all sweet mel-  
ody;  
This song shall be thy rose: its petals  
pale  
Are dead, indeed, my adored Night-  
ingale!  
But soft and fragrant is the faded  
blossom,  
And it has no thorn left to wound thy  
bosom.

High, spirit-winged Heart! who  
dost for ever  
Beat thine unfeeling bars with vain  
endeavour,  
Till those bright plumes of thought,  
in which arrayed

It over-soared this low and worldly  
shade,  
Lie shattered; and thy panting  
wounded breast  
Stains with dear blood its unmaternal  
nest!  
I weep vain tears: blood would less  
bitter be,  
Yet poured forth gladlier, could it  
profit thee.

Seraph of Heaven! too gentle to be  
human,  
Veiling beneath that radiant form of  
Woman  
All that is insupportable in thee  
Of light, and love, and immortality!  
Sweet Benediction in the eternal  
Curse!  
Veiled Glory of this lampless Uni-  
verse!  
Thou Moon beyond the clouds! Thou  
living Form  
Among the Dead! thou Star above  
the Storm!  
Thou Wonder, and thou Beauty, and  
thou Terror,  
Thou Harmony of Nature's art!  
Thou Mirror  
In whom, as in the splendour of the  
Sun,  
All shapes look glorious which thou  
gazest on!  
Ay, even the dim words which ob-  
scure thee now  
Flash, lightning-like, with unaccus-  
tomed glow;  
I pray thee that thou blot from this  
sad song  
All of its much mortality and wrong,  
With those clear drops, which start  
like sacred dew  
From the twin lights thy sweet soul  
darkens through,  
Weeping, till sorrow becomes ecstasy:  
Then smile on it, so that it may not  
die.

I never thought before my death  
to see  
Youth's vision thus made perfect:  
Emily,  
I love thee; though the world by no  
thin name  
Will hide that love from its unvalued  
shame.

Would we two had been twins of the  
 same mother !  
 Or, that the name my heart lent to  
 another  
 Could be a sister's bond for her and  
 thee,  
 Blending two beams of one eternity !  
 Yet were one lawful and the other  
 true,  
 These names, though dear, could paint  
 not, as is due,  
 How beyond refuge I am thine. Ah  
 me !  
 I am not thine ; I am a part of *thee*.

Sweet Lamp ! my moth-like Musc  
 has burnt its wings,  
 Or, like a dying swan who soars and  
 sings,  
 Young Love should teach Time, in his  
 own grey style,  
 All that thou art. Art thou not void  
 of guile,  
 A lovely soul formed to be blest and  
 bless ?  
 A well of sealed and secret happiness,  
 Whose waters like blithe light and  
 music are,  
 Vanquishing dissonance and gloom ?  
 A Star  
 Which moves not in the moving Hea-  
 vens, alone ?  
 A smile amid dark frowns ? a gentle  
 tone  
 Amid rude voices ? a beloved light ?  
 A Solitude, a Refuge, a Delight ?  
 A lute, which those whom love has  
 taught to play  
 Make music on, to soothe the rough-  
 est day  
 And lull fond grief asleep ? a buried  
 treasure ?  
 A cradle of young thoughts of wing-  
 less pleasure ?  
 A violet-shrouded grave of Woe ?—I  
 measure  
 The world of fancies, seeking one like  
 thee,  
 And find—alas ! mine own infirmity.

She met me, Stranger, upon life's  
 rough way  
 And lured me towards sweet Death ;  
 as Night by Day,  
 Winter by Spring, or Sorrow by swift  
 Hope,

Led into light, life, peace. An ante-  
 lope,  
 In the suspended impulse of its light-  
 ness,  
 Were less ethereally light : the bright-  
 ness  
 Of her divinest presence trembles  
 through  
 Her limbs, as underneath a cloud of  
 dew  
 Embodied in the windless heaven of  
 June,  
 Amid the splendour-winged stars, the  
 Moon  
 Burns inextinguishably beautiful :  
 And from her lips, as from a hyacinth  
 full  
 Of honey-dew, a liquid murmur drops,  
 Killing the sense with passion : sweet  
 as stops  
 Of planetary music heard in trance.  
 In her mild lights the starry spirits  
 dance,  
 The sunbeams of those wells which  
 ever leap  
 Under the lightnings of the soul—too  
 deep  
 For the brief fathom-line of thought.  
 or sense.  
 The glory of her being, issuing thence,  
 Stains the dead, blank, cold air with a  
 warm shade  
 Of unentangled intermixture, made  
 By Love, of light and motion ; one in-  
 tense  
 Diffusion, one serene Omnipresence,  
 Whose flowing outlines mingle in  
 their flowing  
 Around her cheeks and utmost fingers  
 glowing [there  
 With the unintermitted blood, which  
 Quivers (as in a fleece of snow-like air  
 The crimson pulse of living morning  
 quiver),  
 Continuously prolonged, and ending  
 never,  
 Till they are lost, and in that Beauty  
 furled  
 Which penetrates and clasps and fills  
 the world ;  
 Scarce visible from extreme loveli-  
 ness.  
 Warm fragrance seems to fall from  
 her light dress,  
 And her loose hair ; and where some  
 heavy tress

The air of her own speed has disen-  
 twined,  
 The sweetness seems to satiate the  
 faint wind ;  
 And in the soul a wild odour is felt,  
 Beyond the sense, like fiery dews that  
 melt  
 Into the bosom of a frozen bud.  
 See where she stands ! a mortal shape  
 indued  
 With love and life and light and deity,  
 And motion which may change but  
 cannot die ;  
 An image of some bright Eternity ;  
 A shadow of some golden dream ; a  
 Splendour  
 Leaving the third sphere pilotless ;  
 a tender  
 Reflection on the eternal Moon of  
 Love,  
 Under whose motions life's dull bil-  
 lows move ;  
 A Metaphor of Spring and Youth and  
 Morning ;  
 A vision like incarnate April, warning  
 With smiles and tears, Frost the  
 Anatomy  
 Into his summer grave.  
 Ah ! woe is me !  
 What have I dared ? where am I  
 lifted ? how  
 Shall I descend, and perish not ? I  
 know  
 That Love makes all things equal : I  
 have heard  
 By mine own heart this joyous truth  
 averred :  
 The spirit of the worm beneath the  
 sod, [God.  
 In love and worship, blends itself with  
 Spouse ! Sister ! Angel ! Pilot of the  
 Fate  
 Whose course has been so starless ! O  
 too late  
 Beloved ! O too soon adored, by me !  
 For in the fields of immortality  
 My spirit should at first have wor-  
 shipped thine,  
 A divine presence in a place divine ;  
 Or should have moved beside it on  
 this earth,  
 A shadow of that substance, from its  
 birth ;  
 But not as now :—I love thee ; yes, I  
 feel

That on the fountain of my heart a  
 scal  
 Is set, to keep its waters pure and  
 bright  
 For thee, since in those tears thou  
 hast delight.  
 We—are we not formed, as notes of  
 music are,  
 For one another, though dissimilar ;  
 Such difference without discord, as  
 can make  
 Those sweetest sounds, in which all  
 spirits shake,  
 As trembling leaves in a continuous  
 air ?  
 Thy wisdom speaks in me, and bids  
 me dare  
 Beacon the rocks on which high hearts  
 are wrecked.  
 I never was attached to that great  
 sect,  
 Whose doctrine is, that each one  
 should select  
 Out of the crowd a mistress or a  
 friend,  
 And all the rest, though fair and wise,  
 commend  
 To cold oblivion, though it is in the  
 code  
 Of modern morals, and the beaten  
 road  
 Which those poor slaves with weary  
 footsteps tread,  
 Who travel to their home among the  
 dead  
 By the broad highway of the world,  
 and so  
 With one chained friend, perhaps a  
 jealous foe,  
 The dreariest and the longest journey  
 go.  
 True Love in this differs from gold  
 and clay,  
 That to divide is not to take away.  
 Love is like understanding, that grows  
 bright,  
 Gazing on many truths ; 'tis like thy  
 light,  
 Imagination ! which, from earth and  
 sky,  
 And from the depths of human phan-  
 tasy,  
 As from a thousand prisms and mir-  
 rors, fills

The Universe with glorious beams,  
and kills  
Error, the worm, with many a sun-  
like arrow  
Of its reverberated lightning. Narrow  
The heart that loves, the brain that  
contemplates,  
The life that wears, the spirit that  
creates  
One object, and one form, and builds  
thereby  
A sepulchre for its eternity.

Mind from its object differs most in  
this :  
Evil from good ; misery from happi-  
ness ;  
The baser from the nobler ; the im-  
pure  
And frail, from what is clear and must  
endure.  
If you divide suffering and dross, you  
may  
Diminish till it is consumed away ;  
If you divide pleasure and love and  
thought,  
Each part exceeds the whole ; and we  
know not  
How much, while any yet remains  
unshared,  
Of pleasure may be gained, of sorrow  
spared :  
This truth is that deep well, whence  
sages draw  
The unenvied light of hope ; the  
eternal law  
By which those live, to whom this  
world of life  
Is as a garden ravaged, and whose  
strife  
Tills for the promise of a later birth  
The wilderness of this Elysian earth.

There was a Being whom my spirit  
oft  
Met on its visioned wanderings, far  
aloft,  
In the clear golden prime of my  
youth's dawn,  
Upon the fairy isles of sunny lawn,  
Amid the enchanted mountains, and  
the caves  
Of divine sleep, and on the air-like  
waves  
Of wonder-level dream, whose tremu-  
lous floor

Paved her light steps ;—on an imag-  
ined shore,  
Under the grey beak of some promon-  
tory  
She met me, robed in such exceeding  
glory,  
That I beheld her not. In solit-  
udes  
Her voice came to me through the  
whispering woods,  
And from the fountains, and the  
odours deep  
Of flowers, which, like lips murmuring  
in their sleep  
Of the sweet kisses which had lulled  
them there  
Breathed but of *her* to the enamoured  
air ;  
And from the breezes whether low or  
loud,  
And from the rain of every passing  
cloud,  
And from the singing of the summer  
birds,  
And from all sounds, all silence. In  
the words  
Of antique verse and high romance,—  
in form,  
Sound, colour—in whatever checks  
that Storm  
Which with the shattered present  
chokes the past ;  
And in that best philosophy, whose  
taste  
Makes this cold common hell, our  
life, a doom  
As glorious as a fiery martyrdom ;  
Her Spirit was the harmony of  
truth.—

Then, from the caverns of my  
dreamy youth  
I sprang, as one sandalled with plumes  
of fire,  
And towards the lodestar of my one  
desire,  
I flitted, like a dizzy moth, whose  
flight  
Is as a dead leaf's in the owlet light,  
When it would seek in Hesper's set-  
ting sphere  
A radiant death, a fiery sepulchre,  
As if it were a lamp of earthly  
flame.—  
But She, whom prayers or tears then  
could not tame,

Passed, like a God throned on a winged  
 planet,  
 Whose burning plumes to tenfold  
 swiftness fan it,  
 Into the dreary cone of our life's  
 shade ;  
 And as a man with mighty loss dis-  
 mayed,  
 I would have followed, though the  
 grave between  
 Yawned like a gulf whose spectres are  
 unseen :  
 When a voice said :—" O Thou of  
 hearts the weakest,  
 The phantom is beside thee whom  
 thou seekest."  
 Then I—" Where ? " the world's  
 echo answered " where ! "  
 And in that silence, and in my despair,  
 I questioned every tongueless wind  
 that flew  
 Over my tower of mourning, if it  
 knew  
 Whither 'twas fled, this soul out of  
 my soul ;  
 And murmured names and spells  
 which have control  
 Over the sightless tyrants of our fate ;  
 But neither prayer nor verse could  
 dissipate  
 The night which closed on her ; nor  
 uncreate  
 That world within this Chaos, mine  
 and me,  
 Of which she was the veiled Divinity,  
 The world I say of thoughts that wor-  
 shipped her :  
 And therefore I went forth, with hope  
 and fear,  
 And every gentle passion sick to  
 death,  
 Feeding my course with expectation's  
 breath,  
 Into the wintry forest of our life ;  
 And struggling through its error with  
 vain strife,  
 And stumbling in my weakness and  
 my haste,  
 And half bewildered by new forms, I  
 passed  
 Seeking among those untaught fores-  
 ters  
 If I could find one form resembling  
 hers,  
 In which she might have masked her-  
 self from me.

There,—One, whose voice was ven-  
 omed melody  
 Sate by a well, under blue night-  
 shade bowers ;  
 The breath of her false mouth was  
 like faint flowers,  
 Her touch was as electric poison,—  
 flame  
 Out of her looks into my vitals came,  
 And from her living cheeks and bosom  
 flew  
 A killing air, which pierced like honey-  
 dew  
 Into the core of my green heart, and  
 lay  
 Upon its leaves ; until, as hair grown  
 grey  
 O'er a young brow, they hid its un-  
 blown prime  
 With ruins of unseasonable time.  
  
 In many mortal forms I rashly  
 sought  
 The shadow of that idol of my  
 thought,  
 And some were fair—but beauty dies  
 away :  
 Others were wise—but honeyed words  
 betray :  
 And One was true—oh ! why not  
 true to me ?  
 Then, as a hunted deer, that could  
 not flee,  
 I turned upon my thoughts, and stood  
 at bay,  
 Wounded, and weak, and panting ;  
 the cold day  
 Trembled, for pity of my strife and  
 pain,  
 When, like a noonday dawn, there  
 shone again  
 Deliverance. One stood on my path  
 who seemed  
 As like the glorious shape which I had  
 dreamed,  
 As is the Moon, whose changes ever  
 run  
 Into themselves, to the eternal Sun ;  
 The cold chaste Moon, the Queen of  
 Heaven's bright isles,  
 Who makes all beautiful on which she  
 smiles.  
 That wandering shrine of soft yet icy  
 flame  
 Which ever is transformed, yet still  
 the same,

And warms not but illumines. Young  
and fair  
As the descended Spirit of that sphere,  
She hid me, as the Moon may hide the  
night  
From its own darkness, until all was  
bright  
Between the Heaven and Earth of my  
calm mind,  
And, as a cloud charioted by the wind,  
She led me to a cave in that wild  
place,  
And sat beside me, with her downward  
face  
Illumining my slumbers, like the  
Moon  
Waxing and waning o'er Endymion.  
And I was laid asleep, spirit and limb,  
And all my being became bright or  
dim  
As the Moon's image in a summer sea,  
According as she smiled or frowned  
on me ;  
And there I lay, within a chaste cold  
bed :  
Alas ! I then was nor alive nor dead :—  
For at her silver voice came Death  
and Life,  
Unmindful each of their accustomed  
strife,  
Masked like twin babes, a sister and a  
brother,  
The wandering hopes of one aban-  
doned mother,  
And through the cavern without  
wings they flew,  
And cried, " Away ! he is not of our  
crew,"  
I wept, and, though it be a dream, I  
weep.

What storms then shook the ocean  
of my sleep,  
Blotting that Moon, whose pale and  
waning lips  
Then shrank as in the sickness of  
eclipse ;—  
And how my soul was as a lampless  
sea,  
And who was then its Tempest ; and  
when She,  
The Planet of that hour, was  
quenched, what frost  
Crept o'er those waters, till from coast  
to coast  
The moving billows of my being fell

Into a death of ice, immovable ;—  
And then—what earthquakes made  
it gape and split,  
The white Moon smiling all the while  
on it,  
These words conceal :—If not, each  
word would be  
The key of staunchless tears. Weep  
not for me !

At length, into the obscure forest  
came  
The vision I had sought through  
grief and shame.  
Athwart that wintry wilderness of  
thorns  
Flashed from her motion splendour  
like the Morn's,  
And from her presence life was radi-  
ated  
Through the grey earth and branches  
bare and dead ;  
So that her way was paved, and  
roofed above  
With flowers as soft as thoughts of  
budding love ;  
And music from her respiration spread  
Like light,—all other sounds were  
penetrated  
By the small, still, sweet spirit of that  
sound,  
So that the savage winds hung mute  
around ;  
And odours warm and fresh fell from  
her hair  
Dissolving the dull cold in the froze  
air :  
Soft as an Incarnation of the Sun,  
When light is changed to love, this  
glorious One  
Floated into the cavern where I lay,  
And called my Spirit, and the dream-  
ing clay  
Was lifted by the thing that dreamed  
below  
As smoke by fire, and in her beauty's  
glow  
I stood, and felt the dawn of my long  
night  
Was penetrating me with living light :  
I knew it was the Vision veiled from  
me  
So many years—that it was Emily.

Thin Spheres of light who rule this  
passive Earth,

<p>             This world of love, this <i>me</i> ; and into              birth              Awaken all its fruits and flowers, and              dart              Magnetic might into its central heart ;              And lift its billows and its mists, and              guide              By everlasting laws each wind and              tide              To its fit cloud, and its appointed              cave ;              And lull its storms, each in the craggy              grave              Which was its cradle, luring to faint              bowers              The armies of the rainbow-winged              showers ;              And, as those married lights, which              from the towers              Of Heaven look forth and fold the              wandering globe              In liquid sleep and splendour, as a              robe ;              And all their many-mingled influence              blend,              If equal, yet unlike, to one sweet              end ;—              So ye, bright regents, with alternate              sway, [day !              Govern my sphere of being, night and              Thou, not disdaining even a borrowed              might ;              Thou, not eclipsing a remoter light ;              And, through the shadow of the sea-              sons three,              From Spring to Autumn's sere ma-              turity,              Light it into the Winter of the tomb,              Where it may ripen to a brighter              bloom.              Thou too, O Comet, beautiful and              fierce,              Who drew the heart of this frail Uni-              verse              Towards thine own ; till, wrecked in              that convulsion,              Alternating attraction and repulsion,              Thine went astray, and that was rent              in twain ;              Oh, float into our azure heaven again !              Be there love's folding-star at thy              return ;              The living Sun will feed thee from its              urn              Of golden fire ; the Moon will veil her              horn           </p>	<p>             In thy last smiles ; adoring Even and              Morn              Will worship thee with incense of              calm breath              And lights and shadows ; as the star              of Death              And Birth is worshipped by those              sisters wild              Called Hope and Fear—upon the              heart are piled              Their offerings,—of this sacrifice              divine              A World shall be the altar.  <span style="display: block; text-align: right;">Lady mine,</span>             Scorn not these flowers of thought,              the fading birth              Which from its heart of hearts that              plant puts forth,              Whose fruit, made perfect by thy              sunny eyes,              Will be as of the trees of Paradise.                The day is come, and thou wilt fly              with me.              To whatsoever of dull mortality              Is mine, remain a vestal sister still ;              To the intense, the deep, the im-              perishable,              Not mine, but me, henceforth be thou              united              Even as a bride, delighting and de-              lighted.              The hour is come :—the destined              Star has risen              Which shall descend upon a vacant              prison.              The walls are high, the gates are              strong, thick set              The sentinels—but true love never              yet              Was thus constrained : it overleaps              all fence :              Like lightning, with invisible vio-              lence              Piercing its continents<sup>d</sup> ; like Heaven's              free breath,              Which he who grasps can hold not ;              liker Death,              Who rides upon a thought, and makes              his way              Through temple, tower, and palace,              and the array              Of arms : more strength has Love              than he or they ;              For he can burst his charnel, and              make free           </p>
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The limbs in chains, the heart in  
agony,  
The soul in dust and chaos.

Emily,

A ship is floating in the harbour now,  
A wind is hovering o'er the moun-  
tain's brow ;

There is a path on the sea's azure  
floor,

No keel has ever ploughed that path  
before ;

The halcyons brood around the foam-  
less isles ;

The treacherous Ocean has forsworn  
its wiles ;

The merry mariners are bold and  
free :

Say, my heart's sister, wilt thou sail  
with me ?

Our bark is as an albatross, whose  
nest

Is a far Eden of the purple East ;  
And we between her wings will sit,  
while Night,

And Day, and Storm, and Calm,  
pursue their flight,

Our ministers, along the boundless  
Sea,

Treading each other's heels, un-  
heededly.

It is an isle under Ionian skies,  
Beautiful as a wreck of Paradise,  
And, for the harbours are not safe and  
good,

This land would have remained a  
solitude

But for some pastoral people native  
there,

Who from the Elysian, clear, and  
golden air

Draw the last spirit of the age of gold,  
Simple and spirited ; innocent and  
bold.

The blue Ægean girds this chosen  
home,

With ever-changing sound and light  
and foam,

Kissing the sifted sands, and caverns  
hoar ;

And all the winds wandering along  
the shore

Undulate with the undulating tide :  
There are thick woods where sylvan  
forms abide ;

And many a fountain, rivulet, and  
pond,

S.P.

As clear as elemental diamond,  
Or serene morning air ; and far be-  
yond,

The mossy tracks made by the goats  
and deer

(Which the rough shepherd treads  
but once a year.)

Pierce into glades, caverns, and  
bowers, and halls

Built round with ivy, which the  
waterfalls

Illumining, with sound that never  
fails,

Accompany the noonday nightin-  
gales ;

And all the place is peopled with,  
sweet airs ;

The light clear element which the isle  
wears

Is heavy with the scent of lemon  
flowers,

Which floats like mist laden with  
unseen showers,

And falls upon the eyelids like faint  
sleep ;

And from the moss violets and jon-  
quils peep,

And dart their arrowy odour through  
the brain

Till you might faint with that de-  
licious pain.

And every motion, odour, beam, and  
tone,

With that deep music is in unison :  
Which is a soul within the soul—  
they seem

Like echoes of an antenatal dream.—  
It is an isle 'twixt Heaven, Air, Earth,

and Sea,  
Cradled, and hung in clear tranquil-  
lity ;

Bright as that wandering Eden Luci-  
fer,

Washed by the soft blue Oceans of  
young air.

It is a favoured place. Famine or  
Blight,

Pestilence, War, and Earthquake,  
never light

Upon its mountain peaks ; blind  
vultures, they

Sail onward far upon their fatal way :  
The winged storms, chaunting their  
thunder-psalm

To other lands, leave azure chasms of  
calm

EE



<p>Over this isle, or weep themselves in dew,          From which its fields and woods ever renew          Their green and golden immortality.          And from the sea there rise, and from the sky          There fall clear exhalations, soft and bright,          Veil after veil, each hiding some delight.          Which Sun or Moon or zephyr draw aside,          Till the isle's beauty, like a naked bride          Glowing at once with love and loveliness,          Blushes and trembles at its own excess :          Yet, like a buried lamp, a Soul no less          Burns in the heart of this delicious isle,          An atom of the Eternal, whose own smile          Unfolds itself, and may be felt not seen.          O'er the grey rocks, blue waves, and forests green,          Filling their bare and void interstices.—          But the chief marvel of the wilderness          Is a lone dwelling, built by whom or how          None of the rustic island-people know ;          'Tis not a tower of strength, though with its height          It overtops the woods ; but, for delight,          Some wise and tender Ocean-King, ere crime          Had been invented, in the world's young prime,          Reared it, a wonder of that simple time,          And envy of the isles, a pleasure-house          Made sacred to his sister and his spouse.          It scarce seems now a wreck of human art,          But, as it were, Titanic ; in the heart          Of Earth having assumed its form, then grown          Out of the mountains, from the living stone,</p>	<p>Lifting itself in caverns light and high :          For all the antique and learned imagery          Has been erased, and in the place of it          The ivy and the wild vine interknit          The volumes of their many-twining stems ;          Parasite flowers illumine with dewy gems          The lampless halls, and when they fade, the sky          Peeps through their winter-woof of tracery          With moonlight patches, or star atoms keen,          Or fragments of the day's intense serene ;          Working mosaic on their Parian floors.          And, day and night, aloof, from the high towers          And terraces, the Earth and Ocean seem          To sleep in one another's arms, and dream          Of waves, flowers, clouds, woods, rocks, and all that we          Read in their smiles, and call reality.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">This isle and house are mine, and I have vowed          Thee to be lady of the solitude.          And I have fitted up some chambers there          Looking towards the golden Eastern air,          And level with the living winds, which flow          Like waves above the living waves below.          I have sent books and music there, and all          Those instruments with which high spirits call          The future from its cradle, and the past          Out of its grave, and make the present last          In thoughts and joys which sleep, but cannot die,          Folded within their own eternity.          Our simple life wants little, and true taste          Hires not the pale drudge Luxury to waste          The scene it would adorn, and therefore still,</p>
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Nature, with all her children, haunts  
the hill.

The ringdove, in the embowering  
ivy, yet

Keeps up her love-lament, and the  
owls flit

Round the evening tower, and the  
young stars glance

Between the quick bats in their twi-  
light dance ;

The spotted deer bask in the fresh  
moonlight

Before our gate, and the slow silent  
night

Is measured by the pants of their  
calm sleep.

Be this our home in life, and when  
years heap

Their withered hours, like leaves, on  
our decay,

Let us become the overhanging day,  
The living soul of this Elysian isle,

Conscious, inseparable, one. Mean-  
while

We two will rise, and sit, and walk  
together,

Under the roof of blue Ionian  
weather,

And wander in the meadows, or  
ascend

The mossy mountains, where the  
blue heavens bend

With lightest winds, to touch their  
paramour ;

Or linger, where the pebble-paven  
shore,

Under the quick faint kisses of the sea  
Trembles and sparkles as with  
ecstasy,—

Possessing and possessed by all that is  
Within that calm circumference of  
bliss,

And by each other, till to love and  
live

Be one :—or, at the noontide hour,  
arrive

Where some old cavern hoar seems  
yet to keep

The moonlight of the expired night  
asleep,

Through which the awakened day  
can never peep ;

A veil for our seclusion, close as  
Night's,

Where secure sleep may kill thine  
innocent lights ;

Sleep, the fresh dew of languid love,  
the rain

Whose drops quench kisses till they  
burn again.

And we will talk, until thought's  
melody

Become too sweet for utterance, and  
it die

In words, to live again in looks, which  
dart

With thrilling tone into the voiceless  
heart,

Harmonizing silence without a sound.  
Our breath shall intermix, our bosoms

bound,  
And our veins beat together ; and our  
lips,

With other eloquence than words,  
eclipse

The soul that burns between them ;  
and the wells

Which boil under our being's inmost  
cells,

The fountains of our deepest life,  
shall be

Confused in passion's golden purity,  
As mountain springs under the morn-  
ing Sun.

We shall become the same, we shall  
be one

Spirit within two frames, Oh ! where-  
fore two ?

One passion in twin-hearts, which  
grows and grew

Till like two meteors of expanding  
flame,

Those spheres instinct with it become  
the same,

Touch, mingle, are transfigured ; ever  
still

Burning, yet ever inconsumable :  
In one another's substance finding

food,

Like flames too pure and light and  
unimbued

To nourish their bright lives with  
baser prey,

Which point to Heaven and cannot  
pass away :

One hope within two wills, one will  
beneath

Two overshadowing minds, one life,  
one death,

One Heaven, one Hell, one immor-  
tality,

And one annihilation. Woe is me !

The winged words on which my soul  
would pierce  
Into the height of love's rare Uni-  
verse,  
Are chains of lead around its flight of  
fire,—  
I pant, I sink, I tremble, I expire!

Weak verses, go, kneel at your  
Sovereign's feet,  
And say:—"We are the masters of  
thy slave;  
What wouldst thou with us and ours  
and thine?"  
Then call your sisters from Oblivion's  
cave,  
All singing loud: "Love's very pain  
is sweet,  
But its reward is in the world divine,  
Which, if not here, it builds beyond  
the grave."  
So shall ye live when I am there.  
Then haste  
Over the hearts of men, until ye meet  
Marina, Vanna, Primus, and the rest,  
And bid them love each other, and be  
blest:  
And leave the troop which errs, and  
which reproves,  
And come and be my guest,—for I  
am Love's.

## ADONAÏS;

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF  
JOHN KEATS,

AUTHOR OF "ENDYMION," "HYPERION,"  
ETC.

Ἀσπὴρ πρὶν μὲν ἔλαμπες ἐνὶ ζώοισιν ἑῷος.  
Νῦν δὲ θανὼν, λάμπεις ἑσπερος ἐν φθιμένοις.

PLATO.

## PREFACE

Φαρμακὸν ἦλθε, βίων, ποτὶ σὸν στομα, φαρμακὸν  
εἶδες?

Ὡς πεν τοῖς χεῖλεσσι ποτέδραμε, κοῦκ ἐγλυκ  
άνθη;

Τις δὲ βρυτὸς τισσοῦτον ἀνάμερος, ἡ κηράσαι  
τοῖς.

Ἡ δοῦναι λαλεῶντι τὸ φάρμακον; ἔκφυγεν ψιδάν.

MOSCHUS, EPITAPH. BION.

It is my intention to subjoin to the  
London edition of this poem, a criti-  
cism upon the claims of its lamented  
object to be classed among the writers  
of the highest genius who have  
adorned our age. My known repug-

nance to the narrow principles of  
taste on which several of his earlier  
compositions were modelled, proves  
at least that I am an impartial judge.  
I consider the fragment of "Hyperion," as second to nothing that  
was ever produced by a writer of the  
same years.

John Keats died at Rome, of a con-  
sumption, in his twenty-fourth year,  
on the 27th of December, 1820, and  
was buried in the romantic and lonely  
cemetery of the Protestants in that  
city, under the pyramid which is the  
tomb of Cestius, and the massy walls  
and towers, now mouldering and  
desolate, which formed the circuit of  
ancient Rome. The cemetery is an  
open space among the ruins, covered  
in winter with violets and daisies.  
It might make one in love with death,  
to think that one should be buried in  
so sweet a place.

The genius of the lamented person  
to whose memory I have dedicated  
these unworthy verses, was not less  
delicate and fragile than it was  
beautiful; and where canker-worms  
abound, what wonder, if its young  
flower was blighted in the bud?  
The savage criticism on his "Endymion," which appeared in the  
*Quarterly Review*, produced the most  
violent effect on his susceptible mind;  
the agitation thus originated ended  
in the rupture of a blood-vessel in the  
lungs; a rapid consumption ensued;  
and the succeeding acknowledgments  
from more candid critics, of the true  
greatness of his powers, were ineffec-  
tual to heal the wound thus wantonly  
inflicted.

It may be well said, that these  
wretched men know not what they  
do. They scatter their insults and  
their slanders without heed as to  
whether the poisoned shaft lights on  
a heart made callous by many blows,  
or one, like Keats's, composed of  
more penetrable stuff. One of their  
associates is, to my knowledge, a  
most base and unprincipled calum-  
niator. As to "Endymion," was it  
a poem, whatever might be its de-  
fects, to be treated contemptuously  
by those who had celebrated with

various degrees of complacency and panegyric, "Paris," and "Woman," and a "Syrian Tale," and Mrs. Le Fanu, and Mr. Barret, and Mr. Howard Payne, and a long list of the illustrious obscure? Are these the men, who in their venal good-nature, presumed to draw a parallel between the Rev. Mr. Milman and Lord Byron? What gnat did they strain at here, after having swallowed all those camels? Against what woman taken in adultery dares the foremost of these literary prostitutes to cast his opprobrious stone? Miserable man! you, one of the meanest, have wantonly defaced one of the noblest specimens of the workmanship of God. Nor shall it be your excuse, that, murderer as you are, you have spoken daggers, but used none.

The circumstances of the closing scene of poor Keats's life were not made known to me until the Elegy was ready for the press. I am given to understand that the wound which his sensitive spirit had received from the criticism of "Endymion" was exasperated at the bitter sense of unrequited benefits; the poor fellow seems to have been hooted from the stage of life, no less by those on whom he had wasted the promise of his genius, than those on whom he had lavished his fortune and his care. He was accompanied to Rome, and attended in his last illness by Mr. Severn, a young artist of the highest promise, who, I have been informed, "almost risked his own life, and sacrificed every prospect, to unwearied attendance upon his dying friend." Had I known these circumstances before the completion of my poem, I should have been tempted to add my feeble tribute of applause to the more solid recompense which the virtuous man finds in the recollection of his own motives. Mr. Severn can dispense with a reward from "such stuff as dreams are made of." His conduct is a golden augury of the success of his future career—may the unextinguished Spirit of his illustrious friend animate the crea-

tions of his pencil, and plead against Oblivion for his name!

ADONAÏS

I  
I WEEP for ADONAÏS—he is dead!  
Oh, weep for Adonaïs! though our  
tears  
Thaw not the frost which binds so  
dear a head!  
And thou, sad Hour, selected from  
all years  
To mourn our loss, rouse thy  
obscure compeers,  
And teach them thine own sorrow.  
Say: "With me  
Died Adonaïs; till the Future dares  
Forget the Past, his fate and fame  
shall be  
An echo and a light unto eternity!"

II

Where wert thou, mighty Mother,  
when he lay,  
When thy son lay, pierced by the  
shaft which flies  
In darkness? where was Iorn  
Urania  
When Adonaïs died? With veiled  
eyes,  
'Mid listening Echoes, in her Para-  
dise  
She sate, while one, with soft en-  
amoured breath,  
Rekindled all the fading melodies,  
With which, like flowers that mock  
the corse beneath,  
He had adorned and hid the coming  
bulk of death.

III

Oh, weep for Adonaïs—he is dead!  
Wake, melancholy Mother, wake  
and weep!  
Yet wherefore? Quench within  
their burning bed  
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud  
heart weep,  
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining  
sleep;  
For he is gone, where all things  
wise and fair  
Descend:—Oh, dream not that the  
amorous Deep  
Will yet restore him to the vital air;

Death feeds on his mute voice, and  
laughs at our despair.

## IV

Most musical of mourners, weep  
again !  
Lament anew, Urania !—He died,  
Who was the Sire of an immortal  
strain,  
Blind, old, and lonely, when his  
country's pride  
The priest, the slave, and the liber-  
ticide,  
Trampled and mocked with many  
a loathed rite  
Of lust and blood ; he went, un-  
terrified,  
Into the gulf of death ; but his clear  
Sprite  
Yet reigns o'er earth ; the third among  
the sons of light.

## V

Most musical of mourners, weep  
anew !  
Not all to that bright station dared  
to climb :  
And happier they their happiness  
who knew,  
Whose tapers yet burn through  
that night of time  
In which suns perished ; others  
more sublime,  
Struck by the envious wrath of  
man or God,  
Have sunk, extinct in their reful-  
gent prime ;  
And some yet live, treading the  
thorny road,  
Which leads, through toil and hate,  
to Fame's serene abode.

## VI

But now, thy youngest, dearest  
one, has perished,  
The nursling of thy widowhood,  
who grew,  
Like a pale flower by some sad  
maiden cherished,  
And fed with true love tears in-  
stead of dew ;  
Most musical of mourners, weep  
anew !  
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest  
and the last,

The bloom, whose petals nipt  
before they blew  
Died on the promise of the fruit, is  
waste ;  
The broken lily lies—the storm is  
overpast.

## VII

To that high Capital, where kingly  
Death  
Keeps his pale court in beauty and  
decay,  
He came ; and bought, with price  
of purest breath,  
A grave among the eternal.—Come  
away !  
Haste, while the vault of blue  
Italian day  
Is yet his fitting charnel-roof !  
while still  
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay ;  
Awake him not ! surely he takes  
his fill  
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of  
all ill.

## VIII

He will awake no more, Oh, never  
more !  
Within the twilight chamber  
spreads apace  
The shadow of white Death, and  
at the door  
Invisible Corruption waits to trace  
His extreme way to her dim  
dwelling-place ;  
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity  
and awe  
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she  
to deface  
So fair a prey, till darkness and the  
law  
Of change, shall o'er his sleep the  
mortal curtain draw.

## IX

Oh, weep for Adonaïs !—The quick  
Dreams,  
The passion-winged Ministers of  
thought,  
Who were his flocks, whom near the  
living streams  
Of his young spirit he fed, and  
whom he taught  
The love which was its music,  
wander not,—

Wander no more, from kindling  
 brain to brain,  
 But droop there, whence they  
 sprung ; and mourn their lot  
 Round the cold heart, where, after  
 their sweet pain,  
 They ne'er will gather strength, nor  
 find a home again.

## X

And one with trembling hand  
 clasps his cold head,  
 And fans him with her moonlight  
 wings, and cries,  
 " Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is  
 not dead ;  
 See, on the silken fringe of his faint  
 eyes,  
 Like dew upon a sleeping flower,  
 there lies  
 A tear some Dream has loosened  
 from his brain."  
 Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise !  
 She knew not 'twas her own ; as  
 with no stain  
 She faded, like a cloud which had  
 outwept its rain.

## XI

One from a lucid urn of starry dew  
 Washed his light limbs, as if em-  
 balming them ;  
 Another clipt her profuse locks, and  
 threw  
 The wreath upon him, like an ana-  
 dem,  
 Which frozen tears instead of pearls  
 begem ;  
 Another in her wilful grief would  
 break  
 Her bow and winged reeds, as if to  
 stem  
 A greater loss with one which was  
 more weak ;  
 And dull the barbed fire against his  
 frozen cheek.

## XII

Another Splendour on his mouth  
 alit,  
 That mouth whence it was wont to  
 draw the breath  
 Which gave it strength to pierce  
 the guarded wit,  
 And pass into the panting heart  
 beneath

With lightning and with music :  
 the damp death  
 Quenched its caress upon its icy  
 lips ;  
 And, as a dying meteor stains a  
 wreath  
 Of moonlight vapour, which the  
 cold night clips,  
 It flushed through his pale limbs, and  
 passed to its eclipse.

## XIII

And others came,—Desires and  
 Adorations,  
 Winged Persuasions, and veiled  
 Destinies,  
 Splendours, and Glooms, and glim-  
 mering Incarnations  
 Of hopes and fears, and twilight  
 Phantasies ;  
 And Sorrow, with her family of  
 Sighs,  
 And Pleasure, blind with tears, led  
 by the gleam  
 Of her own dying smile instead of  
 eyes,  
 Came in slow pomp ;—the moving  
 pomp might seem  
 Like pageantry of mist on an autum-  
 nal stream.

## XIV

All he had loved, and moulded into  
 thought  
 From shape, and hue, and odour,  
 and sweet sound,  
 Lamented Adonaïs. Morning  
 sought  
 Her eastern watch-tower, and her  
 hair unbound,  
 Wet with the tears which should  
 adorn the ground,  
 Dimmed the aerial eyes that kindle  
 day ;  
 Afar the melancholy thunder  
 moaned,  
 Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,  
 And the wild winds flew around, sob-  
 bing in their dismay.

## XV

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless  
 mountains,  
 And feeds her grief with his remem-  
 bered lay,

And will no more reply to winds or  
 • fountains,  
 Or amorous birds perched on the  
 young green spray,  
 Or herdsman's horn, or bell at  
 closing day ;  
 Since she can mimic not his lips,  
 more dear  
 Than those for whose disdain they  
 pined away  
 Into a shadow of all sounds :—a  
 drear  
 Murmur, between their songs, is all  
 the woodmen hear.

## XVI

Grief made the young Spring wild,  
 and she threw down  
 Her kindling buds, as if she Au-  
 tumn were,  
 Or they dead leaves ; since her  
 delight is flown,  
 For whom should she have waked  
 the sullen year ?  
 To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so  
 dear,  
 Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both  
 Thou Adonaïs ; wan they stand  
 and sere  
 Amid the faint companions of their  
 youth  
 With dew all turned to tears ; odour,  
 to sighing ruth.

## XVII

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightin-  
 gale,  
 Mourns not her mate with such  
 melodious pain ;  
 Not so the eagle, who like thee  
 could scale  
 Heaven, and could nourish in the  
 sun's domain  
 Her mighty youth, with morning  
 doth complain,  
 Soaring and screaming round her  
 empty nest,  
 As Albion wails for thee : the curse  
 of Cain  
 Light on his head who pierced thy  
 innocent breast,  
 And scared the angel soul that was its  
 earthly guest !

## XVIII

Ah ! woe is me ! Winter is come  
 and gone,

But grief returns with the revolv-  
 ing year ;  
 The airs and streams renew their  
 joyous tone ;  
 The ants, the bees, the swallows,  
 re-appear ;  
 Fresh leaves and flowers deck the  
 dead Seasons' bier ;  
 The amorous birds now pair in  
 every brake,  
 And build their mossy homes in  
 field and brere ;  
 And the green lizard, and the  
 golden snake,  
 Like unimprisoned flames, out of  
 their trance awake.

## XIX

Through wood and stream and  
 field and hill and Ocean,  
 A quickening life from the Earth's  
 heart has burst,  
 As it has ever done, with change  
 and motion,  
 From the great morning of the  
 world when first  
 God dawned on Chaos ; in its  
 stream immersed,  
 The lamps of Heaven flash with a  
 softer light ;  
 All baser things pant with life's  
 sacred thirst :  
 Diffuse themselves ; and spend in  
 love's delight,  
 The beauty and the joy of their re-  
 newed might.

## XX

The leprous corpse touched by this  
 spirit tender,  
 Exhales itself in flowers of gentle  
 breath ;  
 Like incarnations of the stars,  
 when splendour  
 Is changed to fragrance, they illu-  
 mine death,  
 And mock the merry worm that  
 wakes beneath ;  
 Nought we know dies. Shall that  
 alone which knows  
 Be as a sword consumed before the  
 sheath  
 By sightless lightning ? th' intense  
 atom glows  
 A moment, then is quenched in  
 most cold repose.

## . XXI

Alas! that all we loved of him  
 should be,  
 But for our grief, as if it had not  
 been,  
 And grief itself be mortal! Woe  
 is me!  
 Whence are we, and why are we?  
 of what scene  
 The actors or spectators? Great  
 and mean  
 Meet massed in death, who lends  
 what life must borrow.  
 As long as skies are blue, and fields  
 are green,  
 Evening must usher night, night  
 urge the morrow,  
 Month follow month with woe, and  
 year wake year to sorrow.

## XXII

He will awake no more, Oh, never  
 more!  
 "Wake thou," cried Misery, "child-  
 less Mother, rise  
 Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy  
 heart's core,  
 A wound more fierce than his tears  
 and sighs."  
 And all the Dreams that watched  
 Urania's eyes,  
 And all the echoes whom their  
 sister's song  
 Had held in holy silence, cried,  
 "Arise!"  
 Swift as a Thought by the snake  
 Memory stung,  
 From her ambrosial rest the fading  
 Splendour sprung.

## XXIII

She rose like an autumnal Night,  
 that springs  
 Out of the East, and follows wild  
 and drear  
 The golden Day, which, on eternal  
 wings,  
 Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,  
 Has left the Earth a corpse. Sor-  
 row and fear  
 So struck, so roused, so rapt,  
 Urania,  
 So saddened round her like an  
 atmosphere  
 Of stormy mist; so swept her on  
 her way,

Even to the mournful' place where  
 Adonaïs lay.

## XXIV

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,  
 Through camps and cities rough  
 with stone, and steel,  
 And human hearts, which to her  
 æry tread  
 Yielding not, wounded the invisible  
 Palms of her tender feet where'er  
 they fell;  
 And barbed tongues, and thoughts  
 more sharp than they  
 Rent the soft Form they never  
 could repel,  
 Whose sacred blood, like the young  
 tears of May,  
 Paved with eternal flowers that un-  
 deserving way.

## XXV

In the death-chamber for a mo-  
 ment Death,  
 Shamed by the presence of that  
 living Might,  
 Blushed to annihilation, and the  
 breath  
 Revisited those lips, and life's pale  
 light  
 Flashed through those limbs, so  
 late her dear delight.  
 "Leave me not wild and drear and  
 comfortless,  
 As silent lightning leaves the star-  
 less night!  
 Leave me not!" cried Urania: her  
 distress  
 Roused Death: Death rose and smiled,  
 and met her vain caress.

## XXVI

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me  
 once again;  
 Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may  
 live;  
 And in my heartless breast and  
 burning brain  
 That word, that kiss shall all  
 thoughts else survive,  
 With food of saddest memory kept  
 alive,  
 Now thou art dead, as if it were a  
 part  
 Of thee, my Adonaïs! I would give  
 All that I am to be as thou now art,



But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence depart !

## XXVII

" O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,  
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men  
Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty heart  
Dare the unpastured dragon in his den ?  
Defenceless as thou wert, oh ! where was then  
Wisdom the mirror'd shield, or scorn the spear ?  
Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when  
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,  
The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like deer.

## XXVIII

" The herded wolves, bold only to pursue ;  
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead ;  
The vultures, to the conqueror's banner true,  
Who feed where Desolation first has fed,  
And whose wings rain contagion ;  
—how they fled,  
When, like Apollo, from his golden bow,  
The Pythian of the age one arrow sped  
And smiled !—The spoilers tempt no second blow,  
They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low.

## XXIX

" The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn ;  
He sets, and each ephemeral insect then  
Is gathered into death without a dawn,  
And the immortal stars awake again ;  
So it is in the world of living men :  
A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight

Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and when  
It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light  
Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful night."

## XXX

Thus ceased she : and the mountain shepherds came,  
Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent ;  
The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame  
Over his living head like Heaven is bent,  
An early but enduring monument,  
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song  
In sorrow ; from her wilds Ierne sent  
The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,  
And love taught grief to fall like music from his tongue.

## XXXI

'Midst others of less note, came one frail Form,  
A phantom among men, companionless  
As the last cloud of an expiring storm,  
Whose thunder is its knell ; he, as I guess,  
Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness,  
Actæon-like, and now he fled astray  
With feeble steps o'er the world's wilderness,  
And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,  
Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their prey.

## XXXII

A pard-like Spirit beautiful and swift—  
A love in desolation masked ;—a Power  
Girt round with weakness ;—it can scarce uplift  
The weight of the superincumbent hour ;  
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,

A breaking billow ;—even whilst  
we speak  
Is it not broken ? On the withering  
flower  
The killing sun smiles brightly : on  
a cheek  
The life can burn in blood, even while  
the heart may break.

## XXXIII

Hig head was bound with pansies  
overblown,  
And faded violets, white, and pied,  
and blue ;  
And a light spear topped with a  
cypress cone,  
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy-  
tresses grew  
Yet dripping with the forest's noon-  
day dew,  
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart  
Shook the weak hand that grasped  
it ; of that crew  
He came the last, neglected and  
apart ;  
A herd-abandoned deer, struck by  
the hunter's dart.

## XXXIV

All stood aloof, and at his partial  
moan  
Smiled through their tears ; well  
knew that gentle band  
Who in another's fate now wept  
his own ;  
As in the accents of an unknown  
land  
He sang new sorrow ; sad Urania  
scanned  
The Stranger's mien, and mur-  
mured : " Who art thou ? "  
He answered not, but with a sud-  
den hand  
Made bare his branded and ensan-  
guined brow,  
Which was like Cain's or Christ's.  
Oh ! that it should be so !

## XXXV

What softer voice is hushed over  
the dead ?  
Athwart what brow is that dark  
mantle thrown ?  
What form leans sadly o'er the  
white deathbed,  
In mockery of monumental stone,

The heavy heart heaving without a  
moan ?  
If it be he, who, gentlest of the wise,  
Taught, soothed, loved, honoured  
the departed one ;  
Let me not vex, with inharmonious  
sighs,  
The silence of that heart's accepted  
sacrifice.

## XXXVI

Our Adonaïs has drunk poison—  
Oh !  
What deaf and viperous murderer  
could crown  
Life's early cup with such a draught  
of woe ?  
The nameless worm would now it-  
self disown :  
It felt, yet could escape the magic  
tone  
Whose prelude held all envy, hate  
and wrong,  
But what was howling in one breast  
alone,  
Silent with expectation of the song,  
Whose master's hand is cold, whose  
silver lyre unstrung.

## XXXVII

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy  
fame !  
Live ! fear no heavier chastisement  
from me,  
Thou noteless blot on a remem-  
bered name !  
But be thyself, and know thyself to  
be !  
And ever at thy season be thou free  
To spill the venom when thy fangs  
o'erflow :  
Remorse and Self-contempt shall  
cling to thee ;  
Hot Shame shall burn upon thy  
secret brow,  
And like a beaten hound tremble  
thou shalt—as now.

## XXXVIII

Nor let us weep that our delight is  
fled  
Far from these carrion-kites that  
scream below ;  
He wakes or sleeps with the en-  
during dead ;

Thou canst not soar where he is  
 sitting now.  
 Dust to the dust ! but the pure  
 spirit shall flow  
 Back to the burning fountain  
 whence it came,  
 A portion of the Eternal, which  
 must glow  
 Through time and change, un-  
 quenchably the same,  
 Whilst thy cold embers choke the  
 sordid hearth of shame.

## XXXIX

Peace, peace ! he is not dead, he  
 doth not sleep—  
 He hath awakened from the dream  
 of life—  
 'Tis we, who, lost in stormy visions,  
 keep  
 With phantoms an unprofitable  
 strife,  
 And in mad trance strike with our  
 spirit's knife  
 Invulnerable nothings—*We* decay  
 Like corpses in a charnel ; fear and  
 grief  
 Convulse us and consume us day  
 by day,  
 And cold hopes swarm like worms  
 within our living clay.

## XL

He has outsoared the shadow of our  
 night ;  
 Envy and calumny, and hate and  
 pain,  
 And that unrest which men miscall  
 delight,  
 Can touch him not and torture not  
 again ;  
 From the contagion of the world's  
 slow stain  
 He is secure, and now can never  
 mourn  
 A heart grown cold, a head grown  
 grey in vain ;  
 Nor, when the spirit's self has  
 ceased to burn,  
 With sparkless ashes load an un-  
 lamented urn.

## XLI

He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is  
 dead, not he ;  
 Mourn not for Adonaïs.—Thou  
 young Dawn,

Turn all thy dew to splendour, for  
 from thee  
 The spirit thou lamentest is not  
 gone ;  
 Ye caverns and ye forests, cease  
 to moan !  
 Cease ye faint flowers and foun-  
 tains, and thou Air,  
 Which like a morning veil thy scarf  
 hadst thrown  
 O'er the abandoned Earth, now  
 leave it bare .  
 Even to the joyous stars which smile  
 on its despair !

## XLII

He is made one with Nature :  
 there is heard  
 His voice in all her music, from the  
 moan  
 Of thunder, to the song of night's  
 sweet bird ;  
 He is a presence to be felt and  
 known  
 In darkness and in light, from herb  
 and stone,  
 Spreading itself where'er that  
 Power may move  
 Which has withdrawn his being to  
 its own ;  
 Which wields the world with never  
 wearied love,  
 Sustains it from beneath, and kindles  
 it above.

## XLIII

He is a portion of the loveliness  
 Which once he made more lovely :  
 he doth bear  
 His part, while the one Spirit's  
 plastic stress  
 Sweeps through the dull dense  
 world, compelling there  
 All new successions to the forms  
 they wear,  
 Torturing th' unwilling dross that  
 checks its flight  
 To its own likeness, as each mass  
 may bear ;  
 And bursting in its beauty and its  
 might  
 From trees and beasts and men into  
 the Heavens' light.

## XLIV

The splendours of the firmament of  
 time

May be eclipsed, but are extin-  
guished not ;  
Like stars to their appointed height  
they climb,  
And death is a low mist which can-  
not blot  
The brightness it may veil. When  
lofty thought  
Lifts a young heart above its mor-  
tal lair,  
And love and life contend in it, for  
what  
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead  
live there,  
And move like winds of light on dark  
and stormy air.

## XLV

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown  
Rose from their thrones, built be-  
yond mortal thought,  
Far in the unapparent. Chatter-  
ton  
Rose pale, his solemn agony had  
not  
Yet faded from him ; Sidney, as he  
fought  
And as he fell and as he lived and  
loved,  
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without  
spot,  
Arose ; and Lucan, by his death  
approved ;  
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a  
thing reproved.

## XLVI

And many more, whose names on  
Earth are dark,  
But whose transmitted effluence  
cannot die  
So long as fire outlives the parent  
spark,  
Rose, robed in dazzling immor-  
tality.  
" Thou art become as one of us,"  
they cry ;  
" It was for thee you kingless  
sphere has long  
Swung blind in unascended ma-  
jesty,  
Silent alone amid a Heaven of song.  
Assume thy winged throne, thou  
Vesper of our throng ! "

## XLVII

Who mourns for Adonaïs ? Oh, come  
forth,  
Fond wretch ! and know thyself  
and him aright.  
Clasp with thy panting soul the  
pendulous Earth ;  
As from a centre, dart thy spirit's  
light  
Beyond all worlds, until its spa-  
cious might  
Sate the void circumference  
then shrink  
Even to a point within our day and  
night ;  
And keep thy heart light, lest it  
make thee sink  
When hope has kindled hope, and  
lured thee to the brink.

## XLVIII

Or go to Rome, which is the sepul-  
chre,  
Oh, not of him, but of our joy : 'tis  
nought  
That ages, empires, and religions,  
there  
Lie buried in the ravage they have  
wrought ;  
For such as he can lend,—they  
borrow not  
Glory from those who made the  
world their prey ;  
And he is gathered to the kings of  
thought  
Who waged contention with their  
time's decay,  
And of the past are all that cannot  
pass away.

## XLIX

Go thou to Rome,—at once the  
Paradise,  
The grave, the city, and the wilder-  
ness ;  
And where its wrecks like shattered  
mountains rise,  
And flowering weeds, and fragrant  
copses dress  
The bones of Desolation's naked-  
ness  
Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall  
lead  
Thy footsteps to a slope of green  
access,

Where, like an infant's smile, over  
the dead  
A light of laughing flowers along the  
grass is spread.

L

And grey walls moulder round, on  
which dull Time  
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary  
brand ;  
And one keen pyramid with wedge  
sublime,  
Pavilioning the dust of him who  
planned  
This refuge for his memory, doth  
stand  
Like flame transformed to marble ;  
and beneath  
A field is spread, on which a newer  
band  
Have pitched in Heaven's smile  
their camp of death,  
Welcoming him we lose with scarce  
extinguished breath.

LI

Here pause : these graves are all  
too young as yet  
To have outgrown the sorrow which  
consigned  
Its charge to each ; and if the seal  
is set,  
Here, on one fountain of a mourn-  
ing mind,  
Break it not thou ! too surely shalt  
thou find  
Thine own well full, if thou re-  
turnest home,  
Of tears and gall. From the  
world's bitter wind  
Seek shelter in the shadow of the  
tomb.  
What Adonai's is, why fear we to be-  
come ?

LII

The One remains, the many change  
and pass ;  
Heaven's light for ever shines,  
Earth's shadows fly,  
Life, like a dome of many-coloured  
glass,  
Stains the white radiance of Eterni-  
ty,  
Until Death tramples it to frag-  
ments.—Die,

If thou wouldst be with that which  
thou dost seek !  
Follow where all is fled !—Rome's  
azure sky,  
Flowers, ruins, statues, music,  
words are weak  
The glory they transmute with fitting  
truth to speak.

LIII

Why linger, why turn back, why  
shrink, my Heart ?  
Thy hopes are gone before : from  
all things here  
They have departed ; thou shouldst  
now depart !  
A light is passed from therevolving  
year,  
And man, and woman ; and what  
still is dear  
Attracts to crush, repels to make  
thee wither.  
The soft sky smiles,—the low wind  
whispers near :  
'Tis Adonai's calls ! Oh, hasten  
thither,  
No more let Life divide what Death  
can join together.

LIV

That light whose smile kindles the  
Universe,  
That Beauty in which all things  
work and move,  
That Benediction which the eclips-  
ing Curse  
Of birth can quench not, that sus-  
taining Love  
Which through the web of being  
blindly wove  
By man and beast and earth and  
air and sea,  
Burns bright or dim, as each are  
mirrors of  
The fire for which all thirst, now  
beams on me,  
Consuming the last clouds of cold  
mortality.

LV

The breath whose might I have in-  
voked in song  
Descends on me ; my spirit's bark  
is driven  
Far from the shore, far from the  
trembling throng

Whose sails were never to the tempest given ;  
 The massy earth and sphered skies  
 are riven !  
 I am borne darkly, fearfully afar ;  
 Whilst burning through the inmost  
 veil of Heaven,  
 The soul of Adonais, like a star,  
 Beacons from the abode where the  
 Eternal are.

## TO EMILIA VIVIANI

MADONNA, wherefore hast thou sent  
 to me  
 Sweet basil and mignonette ?  
 Embleming love and health, which  
 never yet  
 \*In the same wreath might be.  
 Alas, and they are wet !  
 Is it with thy kisses or thy tears ?  
 For never rain or dew  
 Such fragrance drew  
 From plant or flower—the very doubt  
 endears  
 My sadness ever new,  
 The sighs I breathe, the tears I shed  
 for thee.

## FROM THE ARABIC

## AN IMITATION

My faint spirit was sitting in the light  
 Of thy looks, my love ;  
 It panted for thee like the hind at  
 noon  
 For the brooks, my love.  
 Thy barb, whose hoofs\* outspeed the  
 tempest's flight,  
 Bore thee far from me ;  
 My heart, for my weak feet were  
 weary soon,  
 Did companion thee.  
 Ah ! fleet<sup>a</sup>er far than fleetest storm or  
 steed,  
 Or the death they bear,  
 The heart which tender thought  
 clothes like a dove  
 With the wings of care ;  
 In the battle, in the darkness, in the  
 need,  
 Shall mine cling to thee,  
 Nor claim one smile for all the com-  
 fort, love,  
 • It may bring to thee.

## TIME

UNFATHOMABLE Sea ! whose waves  
 are years,  
 Ocean of Time, whose waters of  
 deep woe  
 Are brackish with the salt of human  
 tears !  
 Thou shoreless flood, which in thy  
 ebb and flow  
 Claspest the limits of mortality !  
 And sick of prey, yet howling on for  
 more,  
 Vomitest thy wrecks on its inno-  
 citable shore ;  
 Treacherous in calm, and terrible in  
 storm,  
 Who shall put forth on thee,  
 Unfathomable Sea ?

## TO NIGHT

SWIFTLY walk over the western wave,  
 Spirit of Night !  
 Out of the misty eastern cave,  
 Where all the long and lone daylight,  
 Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,  
 Which make thee terrible and dear,—  
 Swift be thy flight !

Wrap thy form in a mantle grey,  
 Star-inwrought !  
 Blind with thine hair the eyes of day,  
 Kiss her until she be wearied out,  
 Then wander o'er city, and sea, and  
 land,  
 Touching all with thine opiate wand—  
 Come, long-sought !

When I arose and saw the dawn,  
 I sighed for thee ;  
 When light rode high, and the dew  
 was gone,  
 And noon lay heavy on flower and  
 tree,  
 And the weary Day turned to his rest,  
 Lingering like an unloved guest,  
 I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,  
 Wouldst thou me ?  
 Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,  
 Murmured like a noontide bee,  
 Shall I nestle near thy side ?  
 Wouldst thou me ?—And I replied,  
 No, not thee !

Death will come when thou art dead,  
 Soon, too soon—  
 Sleep will come when thou art fled ;  
 Of neither would I ask the boon  
 I ask of thee, beloved Night—  
 Swift be thine approaching flight,  
 Come soon, soon !

## A FRAGMENT

As a violet's gentle eye  
 Gazes on the azure sky,  
 Until its hue grows like what it be-  
 holds ;  
 As a grey and empty mist  
 Lies like solid Amethyst,  
 Over the western mountain it en-  
 folds,  
 When the sunset sleeps  
 Upon its snow.

As a strain of sweetest sound  
 Wraps itself the wind around,  
 Until the voiceless wind be music too ;  
 As aught dark, vain and dull,  
 Basking in what is beautiful,  
 Is full of light and love.

## LINES

FAR, far away, O ye  
 Halcyons of Memory !  
 \* Seek some far calmer nest  
 Than this abandoned breast ;—  
 No news of your false spring  
 To my heart's winter bring ;  
 Once having gone, in vain  
 Ye come again.

Vultures, who build your bowers  
 High in the Future's towers !  
 Withered hopes on hopes are spread ;  
 Dying joys, choked by the dead,  
 Will serve your beaks for prey  
 Many a day.

## THE FUGITIVES

## I

THE waters are flashing,  
 The white hail is dashing,  
 The lightnings are glancing,  
 The hoar-spray is dancing—  
 Away !

The whirlwind is rolling,  
 The thunder is tolling,

The forest is swinging,  
 The minster bells ringing—  
 Come away !

The Earth is like Ocean,  
 Wreck-strewn and in motion :  
 Bird, beast, man, and worm,  
 Have crept out of the storm—  
 Come away !

## II

" Our boat has one sail,  
 And the helmsman is pale ;—  
 A bold pilot I trow,  
 Who should follow us now,"—  
 Shouted He—

And she cried : " Ply the oar ;  
 Put off gaily from shore ! "—  
 As she spoke, bolts of death  
 Mixed with hail, specked their path  
 O'er the sea.

And from isle, tower, and rock,  
 The blue beacon-cloud broke,  
 Though dumb in the blast,  
 The red cannon flashed fast  
 From the lee.

## III

" And fear'st thou, and fear'st thou  
 And see'st thou, and hear'st thou ?  
 And drive we not free  
 O'er the terrible sea,  
 I and thou ? "

One boat-cloak did cover  
 The loved and the lover—  
 Their blood beats one measure  
 They murmur proud pleasure  
 Soft and low ;—

While around the lashed Ocean,  
 Like mountains in motion,  
 Is withdrawn and uplifted,  
 Sunk, shattered, and shifted,  
 To and fro.

## IV

In the court of the fortress  
 Beside the pale portress,  
 Like a bloodhound well beaten  
 The bridegroom stands, eaten  
 By shame ;

On the topmost watch-turret,  
As a death-boding spirit,  
Stands the grey tyrant father,  
To his voice the mad weather  
Seems tame ;

And with curses as wild  
As e'er cling to child,  
He devotes to the blast  
The best, loveliest, and last  
• Of his name !

## TO ———

MUSIC, when soft voices die,  
Vibrates in the memory—  
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,  
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,  
Are heaped for the beloved's bed ;  
And so thy thoughts, when thou art  
gone,  
Love itself shall slumber on.

TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT  
GODWIN

MINE eyes were dim with tears un-  
shed ;

Yes, I was firm—thus wert not  
thou ;—

My baffled looks did fear yet dread  
To meet thy looks—I could not  
know

How anxiously they sought to shine  
With soothing pity upon mine.

To sit and curb the soul's mute rage  
Which preys upon itself alone ;  
To curse the life which is the cage  
Of fettered grief that dares not  
groan,

Hiding from many a careless eye  
The scorned load of agony.

Whilst thou alone, then not regarded,  
The [ ] thou alone should be,  
To spend years thus, and be re-  
warded,

As thou, sweet love, requited me  
When none were near—Oh ! I did  
wake

From torture for that moment's sake.

S.P.

Upon my heart thy accents sweet  
Of peace and pity fell like dew  
On flowers half dead ;—thy lips did  
meet

Mine tremblingly ; thy dark eyes  
threw

Their soft persuasion on my brain,  
Charming away its dream of pain.

We are not happy, sweet ! our state  
Is strange and full of doubt and  
fear ;

More need of words that ills abate ;—  
Reserve or censure come not near  
Our sacred friendship, lest there be  
No solace left for thou and me.

Gentle and good and mild thou art,  
Ner can I live if thou appear  
Aught but thyself, or turn thine  
heart

Away from me, or stoop to wear  
The mask of scorn, although it be  
To hide the love thou feel'st for me.

## SONG

RARELY, rarely, comest thou,  
Spirit of Delight !

Wherefore hast thou left me now  
Many a day and night ?

Many a weary night and day  
'Tis since thou art fled away.

How shall ever one like me  
Win thee back again ?  
With the joyous and the free  
Thou wilt scoff at pain.  
Spirit false ! thou hast forgot  
All but those who need thee not.

As a lizard with the shade  
Of a trembling leaf,  
Thou with sorrow art dismayed ;  
Even the sighs of grief  
Reproach thee, that thou art not  
near,  
And reproach thou wilt not hear.

Let me set my mournful ditty  
To a merry measure ;—  
Thou wilt never come for pity,  
Thou wilt come for pleasure ;—  
Pity then will cut away  
Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay.

F.F.



I love all that thou lovest,  
 Spirit of Delight !  
 The fresh Earth in new leaves drest,  
 And the starry night ;  
 Autumn evening, and the morn  
 When the golden mists are born.

I love snow, and all the forms  
 Of the radiant forest ;  
 I love waves, and winds, and storms,  
 Every thing almost  
 Which is Nature's, and may be  
 Untainted by man's misery.

I love tranquil solitude,  
 And such society  
 As is quiet, wise, and good ;  
 Between thee and me  
 What difference ? but thou dost pos-  
 sess  
 The things I seek, not love them less.

I love Love—though he has wings,  
 And like light can flee,  
 But, above all other things,  
 Spirit, I love thee—  
 Thou art love and life ! O come,  
 Make once more my heart thy home.

## EVENING

PONTE AL MARE, PISA

THE sun is set ; the swallows are  
 asleep ;  
 The bats are flitting fast in the grey  
 air ;  
 The slow soft toads out of damp cor-  
 ners creep ;  
 And evening's breath, wandering  
 here and there  
 Over the quivering surface of the  
 stream,  
 Wakes not one ripple from its summer  
 dream.

There is no dew on the dry grass to-  
 night,  
 Nor damp within the shadow of the  
 trees ;  
 The wind is intermitting, dry, and  
 light ;  
 And in the inconstant motion of  
 the breeze  
 The dust and straws are driven up  
 and down,  
 And whirled about the pavement of  
 the town.

Within the surface of the fleeting river  
 The wrinkled image of the city lay,  
 Immovably unquiet, and for ever  
 It trembles, but it never fades  
 away ;  
 Go to the [  
 You, being changed, will find it then  
 as now.

The chasm in which the sun has sunk,  
 is shut  
 By darkest barriers of enormous  
 cloud,  
 Like mountain over mountain  
 huddled—but  
 Growing and moving upwards in a  
 crowd,  
 And over it a space of watery blue,  
 Which the keen evening star is shin-  
 ing through.

## LINES

WRITTEN ON HEARING THE NEWS OF  
THE DEATH OF NAPOLEON

WHAT ! alive and so bold, O Earth ?  
 Art thou not over bold ?  
 What ! leapest thou forth as of old  
 In the light of thy morning mirth,  
 The last of the flock of the starry fold ?  
 Ha ! leapest thou forth as of old ?  
 Are not the limbs still when the ghost  
 is fled,  
 And canst thou move, Napoleon being  
 dead ?

How ! is not thy quick heart cold ?  
 What spark is alive on thy hearth ?  
 How ! is not *his* death-knell knolled ?  
 And livest *thou* still, Mother Earth ?  
 Thou wert warming thy fingers old  
 O'er the embers covered and cold  
 Of that most fiery spirit, when it  
 fled—  
 What, Mother, do you laugh now he is  
 dead ?

" Who has known me of old," replied  
 Earth,  
 " Or who has my story told ?  
 It is thou who art over bold."  
 And the lightning of scorn laughed  
 forth  
 As she sung, " To my bosom I fold  
 All my sons when their knell is  
 knolled,

And so with living motion all are fed,  
And the quick spring like weeds out  
of the dead.

"Still alive and still bold," shouted  
Earth,

"I grow bolder, and still more hold.  
The dead fill me ten thousand fold  
Fuller of speed, and splendour, and  
mirth;

I was cloudy, and sullen, and cold,  
Like a frozen chaos uprolled,  
Till by the spirit of the mighty dead  
My heart grew warm. I feed on  
whom I fed.

"Ay, alive and still bold," muttered  
Earth,

"Napoleon's fierce spirit rolled,  
In terror, and blood, and gold,  
A torrent of ruin to death from his  
birth.

Leave the millions who follow to  
mould

The metal before it be cold,  
And weave into his shame, which like  
the dead

Shrouds me, the hopes that from his  
glory fled."

#### MUTABILITY

THE flower that smiles to-day  
To-morrow dies;  
All that we wish to stay,  
Tempts and then flies;  
What is this world's delight?  
Lightning that mocks the night,  
Brief even as bright.

Virtue, how frail it is!  
Friendship too rare!  
Love, how it sells poor bliss  
For proud despair!  
But we, though soon they fall,  
Survive their joy and all  
Which ours we call.

Whilst skies are blue and bright,  
Whilst flowers are gay,  
Whilst eyes that change ere night  
Make glad the day;  
Whilst yet the calm hours creep,  
Dream thou—and from thy sleep  
Then wake to weep.

#### SONNET

##### POLITICAL GREATNESS

NOR happiness, nor majesty, nor  
fame,  
Nor peace, nor strength, nor skill in  
arms or arts,  
Shepherd those herds whom tyranny  
makes tame;  
Verse echoes not one beating of their  
hearts:  
History is but the shadow of their  
shame;  
Art veils her glass, or from the page-  
ant starts  
As to oblivion their blind millions  
fleet,  
Staining that Heaven with obscene  
imagery  
Of their own likeness. What are  
numbers, knit  
By force or custom? Man who man  
would be,  
Must rule the empire of himself; in it  
Must be supreme, establishing his  
throne  
On vanquished will, quelling the  
anarchy  
Of hopes and fears, being himself  
alone.

#### LINES

IF I walk in Autumn's even  
While the dead leaves pass.  
If I look on Spring's soft heaven,  
Something is not there which was.  
Winter's wondrous frost and snow,  
Summer's clouds, where are they  
now?

#### GINEVRA<sup>1</sup>

WILD, pale, and wonder-stricken,  
even as one  
Who staggers forth into the air and  
sun  
From the dark chamber of a mortal  
fever,  
Bewildered, and incapable, and ever  
Fancying strange comments in her  
dizzy brain  
Of usual shapes, till the familiar train

<sup>1</sup> This fragment is part of a poem which Shelley intended to write, founded on a story to be found in the first volume of a book entitled *L'Ossequatore Fiorentino*,

Of objects and of persons passed like things  
 Strange as a dreamer's mad imaginings,  
 Ginevra from the nuptial altar went ;  
 The vows to which her lips had sworn assent  
 Rung in her brain still with a jarring din,  
 Deafening the lost intelligence within.

And so she moved under the bridal veil,  
 Which made the paleness of her cheek more pale,  
 And deepened the faint crimson of her mouth,  
 And darkened her dark locks, as moonlight doth,—  
 And of the gold and jewels glittering there  
 She scarce felt conscious, but the weary glare  
 Lay like a chaos of unwelcome light,  
 Vexing the sense with gorgeous undelight.  
 A moonbeam in the shadow of a cloud  
 Was less heavenly fair—her face was bowed,  
 And as she passed, the diamonds in her hair  
 Were mirrored in the polished marble stair  
 Which led from the cathedral to the street ;  
 And even as she went her light fair feet  
 Erased these images.

The bride-maidens who round her thronging came  
 Some with a sense of self-rebuke and shame,  
 Envyng the unenviable ; and others  
 Making the joy which should have been another's  
 Their own by gentle sympathy ; and some  
 Sighing to think of an unhappy home ;  
 Some few admiring what can ever lure  
 Maidens to leave the heaven serene and pure  
 Of parents' smiles for life's great cheat ; a thing  
 Bitter to taste, sweet in imagining.

But they are all dispersed—and lo ! she stands  
 Looking in idle grief on her white hands,  
 Alone within the garden now her own ;  
 And through the sunny air with jangling tone,  
 The music of the merry marriage-bells,  
 Killing the azure silence, sinks and swells ;—  
 Absorbed like one within a dream who dreams  
 That he is dreaming, until slumber seems  
 A mockery of itself—when suddenly  
 Antonio stood before her, pale as she.  
 With agony, with sorrow, and with pride,  
 He lifted his wan eyes upon the bride,  
 And said—" Is this thy faith ? " and then as one  
 Whose sleeping face is stricken by the sun  
 With light like a harsh voice, which bids him rise  
 And look upon his day of life with eyes  
 Which weep in vain that they can dream no more,  
 Ginevra saw her lover, and forbore  
 To shriek or faint, and checked the stifling blood  
 Rushing upon her heart, and unsubdued  
 Said—" Friend, if earthly violence or ill,  
 Suspicion, doubt, or the tyrannic will  
 Of parents, chance, or custom, time, or change,  
 Or circumstance, or terror, or revenge,  
 Or wildered looks, or words, or evil speech,  
 With all their stings and venom, can impeach  
 Our love,—we love not :—if the grave, which hides  
 The victim from the tyrant, and divides  
 The cheek that whitens from the eyes that dart  
 Imperious inquisition to the heart  
 That is another's, could dis sever ours,  
 We love not."—" What ! do not the silent hours

Beckon thee, to Gherardi's bridal  
 bed ?  
 Is not that ring "—a pledge, he  
 would have said  
 Of broken vows, but she with patient  
 look  
 The golden circle from her finger took  
 And said—" Accept this token of my  
 faith,  
 The pledge of vows to be absolved by  
 death ;  
 And I am dead or shall be soon—my  
 knell  
 Will mix its music with that merry  
 bell ;  
 Does it not sound as if they sweetly  
 said,  
 ' We toll a corpse out of the marriage  
 bed ? '  
 The flowers upon my bridal chamber  
 strewn  
 Will serve unfaded for my bier—so  
 soon  
 That even the dying violet will not  
 die [tasy  
 Before Ginevra.' ' The strong fan-  
 Had made her accents weaker and  
 wore weak,  
 And quenched the crimson life upon  
 her cheek,  
 And glazed her eyes, and spread an  
 atmosphere  
 Round her, which chilled the burning  
 noon with fear,  
 Making her but an image of the  
 thought,  
 Which, like a prophet or a shadow,  
 brought  
 News of the terrors of the coming  
 time.  
 Like an accuser branded with the  
 crime  
 He would have cast on a beloved  
 friend,  
 Whose dying eyes reproach not to  
 the end  
 The pale betrayer—he then with vain  
 repentance  
 Would share, he cannot now avert,  
 the sentence—  
 Antonio stood and would have  
 spoken, when  
 The compound voice of women and  
 of men  
 Was heard approaching ; he retired,  
 while she

Was led amid the admiring company  
 Back to the palace,—and her maidens  
 soon  
 Changed her attire for the afternoon,  
 And left her at her own request to  
 keep  
 An hour of quiet and rest : like one  
 asleep  
 With open eyes and folded hands she  
 lay,  
 Pale in the light of the declining day.

Meanwhile the day sinks fast, the  
 sun is set,  
 And in the lighted hall the guests are  
 met ;  
 The beautiful looked lovelier in the  
 light  
 Of love, and admiration, and delight,  
 Reflected from a thousand hearts and  
 eyes  
 Kindling a momentary Paradise.  
 This crowd is safer than the silent  
 wood,  
 Where love's own doubts disturb the  
 solitude ;  
 On frozen hearts the fiery rain of wine  
 Falls, and the dew of music more  
 divine  
 Tempers the deep emotions of the  
 time  
 To spirits cradled in a sunny clime :—  
 How many meet, who never yet have  
 met,  
 To part too soon, but never to forget ?  
 How many saw the beauty, power,  
 and wit  
 Of looks and words which ne'er  
 enchanted yet !  
 But life's familiar veil was now with-  
 drawn,  
 As the world leaps before an earth-  
 quake's dawn,  
 And unprophetic of the coming  
 hours,  
 The matin winds from the expanded  
 flowers  
 Scatter their hoarded incense, and  
 awaken  
 The earth, until the dewy sleep is  
 shaken  
 From every living heart which it  
 possesses,  
 Through seas and winds, cities and  
 wildernesses,  
 As if the future and the past were all

Treasured in the instant ;—so Gherardi's hall  
 Laughed in the mirth of its lord's festival,  
 Till some one asked—" Where is the Bride ? " And then  
 A bridesmaid went, and ere she came again  
 A silence fell upon the guests—a pause  
 Of expectation, as when beauty awes  
 All hearts with its approach, though unbeheld ;  
 Then wonder, and then fear that wonder quelled ;—  
 For whispers passed from mouth to ear which drew  
 The colour from the hearer's cheeks, and flew  
 Louder and swifter round the company ;  
 And then Gherardi entered with an eye  
 Of ostentatious trouble, and a crowd surrounded him, and some were weeping loud.

They found Ginevra dead ! if it be death,  
 To lie without motion, or pulse, or breath,  
 With waxen cheeks, and limbs cold, stiff, and white,  
 And open eyes, whose fixed and glassy light  
 Mocked at the speculation they had owned.  
 If it be death, when there is felt around  
 A smell of clay, a pale and icy glare,  
 And silence, and a sense that lifts the hair  
 From the scalp to the ankles, as it were  
 Corruption from the spirit passing forth,  
 And giving all it shrouded to the earth,  
 And leaving as swift lightning in its flight  
 Ashes, and smoke, and darkness : in our night  
 \*Of thought we know thus much of death,—no more  
 Than the unborn dream of our life before

Their barks are wrecked on its inhospitable shore.  
 The marriage feast and its solemnity  
 Was turned to funeral pomp—the company,  
 With heavy hearts and looks, broke up ; nor they  
 Who loved the dead went weeping on their way  
 Alone, but sorrow mixed with sad surprise  
 Loosened the springs of pity\* in all eyes,  
 On which that form, whose fate they weep in vain,  
 Will never, thought they, kindle smiles again.  
 The lamps which, half extinguished in their haste,  
 Glamed few and faint o'er the abandoned feast,  
 Showed as it were within the vaulted room  
 A cloud of sorrow hanging, as if gloom  
 Had passed out of men's minds into the air.  
 Some few yet stood around Gherardi there,  
 Friends and relations of the dead,—and he,  
 A loveless man, accepted torpidly  
 The consolation that he wanted not,  
 Awe in the place of grief within him wrought.  
 Their whispers made the solemn silence seem  
 More still—some wept, [ ]  
 Some melted into tears without a sob,  
 And some with hearts that might be heard to throb  
 Leant on the table, and at intervals  
 Shuddered to hear through the deserted halls  
 And corridors the thrilling shrieks which came  
 Upon the breeze of night, that shook the flame  
 Of every torch and taper as it swept  
 From out the chamber where the women kept ;—  
 Their tears fell on the dear companion cold  
 Of pleasures now departed ; then was knolled  
 The bell of death, and soon the priests arrived,

And finding death their penitent had  
shrived,  
Returned like ravens from a corpse  
whereon  
A vulture has just feasted to the  
bone.  
And then the mourning women  
came.—

\* \* \*

## THE DIRGE

OLD winter was gone  
In his weakness back to the moun-  
tains hoar,  
And the spring came down  
From the planet that hovers upon the  
shore  
Where the sea of sunlight encroaches  
On the limits of wintry night ;  
If the land, and the air, and the sea,  
Rejoice not when spring approaches,  
We did not rejoice in thee,  
Cinevra !

She is still, she is cold  
On the bridal couch,  
One step to the white deathbed,  
And one to the bier,  
And one to the charnel—and one, Oh  
where ?  
The dark arrow fled  
In the noon.

Ere the sun through heaven once  
more has rolled  
The rats in her heart  
Will have made their nest,  
And the worms be alive in her golden  
hair ;  
While the spirit that guides the sun  
Sits throned in his flaming chair,  
She shall sleep.

\* \* \*

## TO-MORROW

WHERE art thou, beloved To-morrow ?  
When young and old, and strong  
and weak,  
Rich and poor, through joy and  
sorrow,  
Thy sweet smiles we ever seek,—  
In thy place—ah ! well-a-day !  
We find the thing we fled—To-day.

THE BOAT ON THE  
SERCHIO

OUR boat is asleep on Serchio's  
stream,  
Its sails are folded like thoughts in a  
dream,  
The helm sways idly, hither and  
thither ;  
Dominic, the boatman, has brought  
the mast,  
And the oars, and the sails ; but 'tis  
sleeping fast,  
Like a beast, unconscious of its tether.

The stars burnt out in the pale blue  
air,  
And the thin white moon lay wither-  
ing there,  
To tower, and cavern, and rift, and  
tree,  
The owl and the bat fled drowsily.  
Day had kindled the dewy woods  
And the rocks above and the stream  
below,  
And the vapours in their multitudes,  
And the Apennines' shroud of sum-  
mer snow,  
And clothed with light of æry gold  
The mists in their eastern caves  
uprolled.

Day had awakened all things that be,  
The lark and the thrush and the  
swallow free ;  
And the milkmaid's song and the  
mower's scythe,  
And the matin bell and the mountain  
bee :  
Fireflies were quenched on the dewy  
corn,  
Glow-worms went out on the river's  
brim,  
Like lamps which a student forgets  
to trim :  
The beetle forgot to wind his horn,  
The crickets were still in the meadow  
and hill :  
Like a flock of rooks at a farmer's  
gun,  
Night's dreams and terrors, every  
one,  
Fled from the brains which are their  
prey,  
From the lamp's death to the mort-  
ing ray.

All rose to do the task He set to each,  
 Who shaped us to his ends and not our own ;  
 The million rose to learn, and one to teach  
 What none yet ever knew or can be known.

And many rose  
 Whose woe was such that fear became desire ;—  
 Melchior and Lionel were not among those ;  
 They from the throng of men had stepped aside,  
 And made their home 'under the green hill side.  
 It was that hill, whose intervening brow  
 Screens Lucca from the Pisan's envious eye,  
 Which the circumfluous plain waving below,  
 Like a wide lake of green fertility,  
 With streams and fields and marshes bare,  
 Divides from the far Apennines—which lie  
 Islanded in the immeasurable air.

"What think you, as she lies in her green cove,  
 Our little sleeping boat is dreaming of ?  
 If morning dreams are true, why I should guess  
 That she was dreaming of our idleness,  
 And of the miles of watery way  
 We should have led her by this time of day."—

—"Never mind," said Lionel,  
 "Give care to the winds, they can bear it well

About yon poplar tops ; and see !  
 The white clouds are driving merrily,  
 And the stars we miss this morn will light

More willingly our return to-night.—  
 List, my dear fellow, the breeze blows fair ;

How it scatters Dominic's long black hair !

Singing of us, and our lazy motions,  
 If I can guess a boat's emotions."—

The chain is loosed, the sails are spread,

The living breath is fresh behind,  
 As, with dews and sunrise fed,  
 Comes the laughing morning wind ;—  
 The sails are full, the boat makes head  
 Against the Serchio's torrent fierce,  
 Then flags with intermitting course,  
 And hangs upon the wave,  
 Which fervid from its mountain source

Shallow, smooth, and strong, doth come,—

Swift as fire, tempestuously  
 It sweeps into the affrighted sea ;  
 In morning's smile its eddies coil,  
 Its billows sparkle, toss, and boil,  
 Torturing all its quiet light  
 Into columns fierce and bright.

The Serchio, twisting forth  
 Between the marble barriers which it clove

At Ripafratta, leads through the dread chasm

The wave that died the death which lovers love,

Living in what it sought ; as if this spasm

Had not yet past, the toppling mountains cling,

But the clear stream in full enthusiasm

Pours itself on the plain, until wandering,

Down one clear path of effluence crystalline

Sends its clear waves, that they may fling

At Arno's feet tribute of corn and wine :

Then, through the pestilential deserts wild

Of tangled marsh and woods of stunted fir,

It rushes to the Ocean.

### THE AZIOLA

"Do you not hear the Aziola cry ?  
 Methinks she must be nigh,"

Said Mary, as we sate  
 In dusk, ere the stars were lit, or candles brought ;

And I, who thought  
 This Aziola was some tedious woman,

Asked, "Whp is Aziola?" How  
 elate  
 felt to know that it was nothing  
 human,  
 No mockery of myself to fear and  
 hate!  
 And Mary saw my soul,  
 And laughed and said, "Disquiet  
 yourself not,  
 'Tis nothing but a little downy  
 owl."

Sad Aziola! many an eventide  
 Thy music I had heard  
 By wood and stream, meadow and  
 mountain side,  
 And fields and marshes wide,—  
 Such as nor voice, nor lute, nor  
 wind, nor bird,  
 The soul ever stirred;  
 Unlike and far sweeter than they all:  
 Sad Aziola! from that moment I  
 Loved thee and thy sad cry.

## A LAMENT

O WORLD! O life! O time!  
 On whose last steps I climb,  
 Trembling at that where I had stood  
 before;  
 When will return the glory of your  
 prime?  
 No more—Oh, never more!

Out of the day and night  
 A joy has taken flight:  
 Fresh spring, and summer, and  
 winter hoar,  
 Move my faint heart with grief, but  
 with delight  
 No more—Oh, never more!

## TO EDWARD WILLIAMS

I  
 THE serpent is shut out from Para-  
 dise.  
 The wounded deer must seek the  
 herd no more  
 In which its heart-cure lies:  
 The widowed dove must cease to  
 haunt a bower,  
 Like that from which its mate with  
 feigned sighs  
 Fled in the April hour.  
 I too, must seldom seek again  
 Near, happy friends a mitigated pain.

II  
 Of hatred I am proud,—with scorn  
 content;  
 Indifference, that once hurt me, now  
 is grown  
 Itself indifferent.  
 But, not to speak of love, pity alone  
 Can break a spirit already more than  
 bent.  
 The miserable one  
 Turns the mind's poison into food,—  
 Its medicine is tears,—its evil good.

III  
 Therefore if now I see you seldomer,  
 Dear friends, dear *friend*! know that  
 I only fly  
 Your looks because they stir  
 Griefs that should sleep, and hopes  
 that cannot die:  
 The very comfort that they minister  
 I scarce can bear; yet I,  
 So deeply is the arrow gone,  
 Should quickly perish if it were with-  
 drawn.

IV  
 When I return to my cold home, you  
 ask  
 Why I am not as I have ever been?  
 You spoil me for the task  
 Of acting a forced part on life's dull  
 scene,—  
 Of wearing on my brow the idle mask  
 Of author, great or mean,  
 In the world's Carnival. I sought  
 Peace thus, and but in you I found  
 it not.

V  
 Full half an hour, to-day, I tried my  
 lot  
 With various flowers, and every one  
 still said,  
 "She loves me,—loves me not."<sup>1</sup>  
 And if this meant a vision long since  
 fled—  
 If it meant fortune, fame, or peace  
 of thought—  
 If it meant—but I dread  
 To speak what you may know too  
 well:  
 Still there was truth in the sad oracle.

<sup>1</sup> See *Faust*.



## VI

The crane o'er seas and forests seeks  
her home ;  
No bird so wild, but has its quiet nest,  
When it no more would roam ;  
The sleepless billows on the ocean's  
breast  
Break like a bursting heart, and die  
in foam,  
And thus, at length, find rest :  
Doubtless there is a place of peace  
Where *my* weak heart and all its  
throbs will cease.

## VII

I asked her, yesterday, if she believed  
That I had resolution. One who *had*  
Would ne'er have thus relieved  
His heart with words,—but what  
his judgment bade  
Would do, and leave the scorner  
unreprieved.  
These verses are too sad  
To send to you, but that I know,  
Happy yourself, you feel another's  
woe.

## REMEMBRANCE

SWIFTER far than summer's flight,  
Swifter far than youth's delight,  
Swifter far than happy night,  
Art thou come and gone :  
As the earth when leaves are dead,  
As the night when sleep is sped,  
As the heart when joy is fled,  
I am left lone, alone.

The swallow Summer comes again,  
The owl Night resumes her reign,  
But the wild swan Youth is fain  
To fly with thee, false as thou.  
My heart each day desires the  
morrow,  
Sleep itself is turned to sorrow,  
Vainly would my winter borrow  
Sunny leaves from any bough.

Lilies for a bridal bed,  
Roses for a matron's head,  
Violets for a maiden dead,  
Pansies let my flowers be ;  
On the living grave I bear,  
Scatter them without a tear,  
Let no friend, however dear,  
Waste one hope, one fear for me

## THE INDIAN SERENADE

I ARISE from dreams of thee  
In the first sweet sleep of night,  
When the winds are breathing low,  
And the stars are shining bright.  
I arise from dreams of thee,  
And a spirit in my feet  
Has led me—who knows how ?  
To thy chamber window, sweet !

The wandering airs they faint  
On the dark, the silent stream—  
The champak odours fail  
Like sweet thoughts in a dream ;  
The nightingale's complaint,  
It dies upon her heart,  
As I must die on thine,  
O beloved as thou art !

O lift me from the grass !  
I die, I faint, I fail !  
Let thy love in kisses rain  
On my lips and eyelids pale.  
My cheek is cold and white, alas !  
My heart beats loud and fast,  
Oh ! press it close to thine again,  
Where it will break at last.

## TO ———

ONE word is too often profaned  
For me to profane it,  
One feeling too falsely disdained  
For thee to disdain it.  
One hope is too like despair  
For prudence to smother,  
And Pity from thee more dear  
Than that from another.

I can give not what men call love,  
But wilt thou accept not  
The worship the heart lifts above  
And the Heavens reject not :  
The desire of the moth for the star,  
Of the night for the morrow,  
The devotion to something afar  
From the sphere of our sorrow ?

## MUSIC

I PANT for the music which is divine,  
My heart in its thirst is a dying  
flower ;  
Pour forth the sound like enchanted  
wine,

Loosen the notes in a silver shower ;  
Like a herbless plain for the gentle  
rain,  
I gasp, I faint, till they wake again.

Let me drink of the spirit of that  
sweet sound,  
More, O more ! I am thirsting yet,  
It loosens the serpent which care has  
bound

Up on my heart, to stifle it :  
The dissolving strain, through every  
vein,  
Passes into my heart and brain.

As the scent of a violet wither'd up,  
Which grew by the brink of a silver  
lake,  
When the hot noon has drained its  
dewy cup,  
And mist there was none its thirst  
to slake—  
And the violet lay dead while the  
odour flew  
On the wings of the wind o'er the  
waters blue—

As one who drinks from a charmed  
cup  
Of foaming, and sparkling, and  
murmuring wine,  
Whom, a mighty Enchantress filling  
up,  
Invites to love with her kiss divine.

\* \* \* \*

TO ———

WHEN passion's trance is overpast,  
If tenderness and truth could last  
Or live, whilst all wild feelings keep  
Some mortal slumber, dark and deep,  
I should not weep, I should not weep !

It were enough to feel, to see  
Thy soft eyes gazing tenderly,  
And dream the rest—and burn and be  
The secret food of fires unseen,  
Couldst thou but be as thou hast been.

After the slumber of the year  
The woodland violets re-appear ;  
All things revive in field or grove,  
And sky and sea ; but two, which  
move,  
And for all others, life and love.

## A BRIDAL SONG

THE golden gates of sleep unbar  
Where strength and beauty, met  
together,  
Kindle their image like a star  
In a sea of glassy weather !  
Night, with all thy stars look down,—  
Darkness, weep thy holiest dew,—  
Never smiled the inconstant moon  
On a pair so true.  
Let eyes not see their own delight ;—  
Haste, swift Hour, and thy flight  
Oft renew.

Fairies, sprites, and angels, keep her !  
Holy powers, permit no wrong !  
And return to wake the sleeper,  
Dawn, ere it be long.  
O joy ! O fear ! what will be done  
In the absence of the sun !  
Come along !

## A FRAGMENT

THEY were two cousins, almost like  
two twins,  
Except that from the catalogue of  
sins  
Nature had razed their love—which  
could not be  
But by dissevering their nativity.  
And so they grew together, like two  
flowers  
Upon one stem, which the same  
beams and showers  
Lull or awaken in their purple prime,  
Which the same hand will gather—  
the same clime  
Shake with decay. This fair day  
smiles to see  
All those who love,—and who e'er  
loved like thee,  
Fiordispina ? Scarcely Cosimo,  
Within whose bosom and whose  
brain now glow  
The ardours of a vision which obscure  
The very idol of its portraiture ;  
He faints, dissolved into a sense of  
love ;  
But thou art as a planet sphere'd  
above,  
But thou art Love itself—ruling the  
motion  
Of his subjected spirit :—such emo-  
tion

Must end in sin or sorrow, if sweet  
 May  
 Had not brought forth this morn—  
 your wedding-day.

## GOOD-NIGHT

GOOD-NIGHT ? ah ! no ; the hour is ill  
 Which severs those it should unite ;  
 Let us remain together still,  
 Then it will be *good* night.

How can I call the lone night good,  
 Though thy sweet wishes wing its  
 flight ?

Be it not said, though, understood,  
 That it will be *good* night.

To hearts which near each other move  
 From evening close to morning  
 light,

The night is good ; because, my love,  
 They never *say* good-night.

## DIRGE FOR THE YEAR

ORPHAN hours, the year is dead,  
 Come and sigh, come and weep !

Merry hours, smile instead,  
 For the year is but asleep :  
 See, it smiles as it is sleeping,  
 Mocking your untimely weeping.

As an earthquake rocks a corpse  
 In its coffin in the clay,  
 So White Winter, that rough nurse,  
 Rocks the dead-cold year to-day ;  
 Solemn hours ! wail aloud  
 For your mother in her shroud.

As the wild air stirs and sways  
 The tree-swung cradle of a child,  
 So the breath of these rude days  
 Rocks the year :—be calm and  
 mild,

Trembling hours ; she will arise  
 With new love within her eyes.

January grey is here,  
 Like a sexton by her grave ;  
 February bears the bier,  
 March with grief doth howl and  
 rave,  
 And April weeps—but, O ye hours  
 Follow with May's fairest flowers.

## POEMS WRITTEN IN 1822

THE ZUCCA <sup>1</sup>

SUMMER was dead and Autumn was  
 expiring,

And infant Winter laughed upon  
 the land

All cloudlessly and cold ;—when I, de-  
 siring

More in this world than any under-  
 stand,

Wept o'er the beauty, which, like sea  
 retiring,

Had left the earth bare as the wave-  
 worn sand

Of my poor heart, and o'er the grass  
 and flowers

Pale for the falsehood of the flattering  
 hours.

Summer was dead, but I yet lived to  
 weep

<sup>1</sup> Pumpkin.

The instability of all but weeping ;  
 And on the earth lulled in her winter  
 sleep

I woke, and envied her as she was  
 sleeping.

Too happy Earth ! over thy face shall  
 creep

The wakening vernal airs, until  
 thou, leaping

From unremembered 'dreams shalt  
 [ ] see

No death divide thy immortality.

I loved—O no, I mean not one of ye,  
 Or any earthly one, though ye are  
 dear

As human heart to human heart may  
 be ;—

I loved, I know not what—but this  
 low sphere,  
 And all that it contains. contains not  
 thee,

Thou, whom, seen nowhere, I feel  
everywhere,  
Dim object of my soul's idolatry.

\* \* \*

By Heaven and Earth, from all whose  
shapes thou flowest,  
Neither to be contained, delayed,  
or hidden,  
Making divine the loftiest and the  
lowest,  
When for a moment thou art not  
forbidden  
To live within the life which thou be-  
stowest,  
And leaving noblest things, vacant  
and chidden,  
Cold as a corpse after the spirit's  
flight,  
Blank as the sun after the birth of  
night.

In winds, and trees, and streams, and  
all things common,  
In music, and the sweet unconscious  
tone  
Of animals, and voices which are  
human,  
Meant to express some feelings of  
their own ;  
In the soft motions and rare smile of  
woman,  
In flowers and leaves, and in the  
fresh grass shown,  
Or dying in the autumn, I the most  
Adore thee present, or lament thee  
lost.

And thus I went lamenting, when I  
saw  
A plant upon the river's margin lie,  
Like one who loved beyond his Na-  
ture's law,  
And in despair had cast him down  
to die ;  
Its leaves which had outlived the  
frost, the thaw  
Had blighted as a heart which  
hatred's eye  
Can blast not, but which pity kills ;  
the dew  
Lay on its spotted leaves like tears  
too true.

The Heavens had wept upon it, but  
the Earth

Had crushed it on her unmaternal  
breast.

\* \* \*

I bore it to my chamber, and I plant-  
ed  
It in a vase full of the lightest  
mould ;  
The winter beams which out of Hea-  
ven slanted  
Fell through the window panes,  
disrobed of cold,  
Upon its leaves and flowers ; the star  
which panted  
In evening for the Day, whose car  
has rolled  
Over the horizon's wave, with looks  
of light  
Smiled on it from the threshold of the  
night.

The mitigated influences of air  
And light revived the plant, and  
from it grew  
Strong leaves and tendrils, and its  
flowers fair,  
Full as a cup with the vine's burn-  
ing dew,  
O'erflowed with golden colours ; an  
atmosphere  
Of vital warmth, infolded it anew,  
And every impulse sent to every part  
The unbeheld pulsations of its heart.

Well might the plant grow beautiful  
and strong,  
Even if the sun and air had smiled  
not on it ;  
For one wept o'er it all the winter long  
Tears pure as Heaven's rain, which  
fell upon it  
Hour after hour ; for sounds of softest  
song  
Mixed with the stringed melodies  
that won it  
To leave the gentle lips on which it  
slept,  
Had loosed the heart of him who sat  
and wept ;

Had loosed his heart, and shook the  
leaves and flowers  
On which he wept, the while the  
savage storm  
Waked by the darkest of December's  
hours

Was raving round the chamber  
 hushed and warm ;  
 The birds were shivering in their leaf-  
 less bowers,  
 The fish were frozen in the pools,  
 the form  
 Of every summer plant was dead  
 [        ]  
 Whilst this        \*        \*        \*

### THE MAGNETIC LADY TO HER PATIENT

"SLEEP, sleep on ! forget thy pain ;  
 My hand is on thy brow,  
 My spirit on thy brain ;  
 My pity on thy heart, poor friend ;  
 And from my fingers flow  
 The powers of life, and like a sign,  
 Seal thee from thine hour of woe ;  
 And brood on thee, but may not  
 blend  
 With thine.

"Sleep, sleep on ! I love thee not ;  
 But when I think that *he*  
 Who made and makes my lot  
 As full of flowers, as thine of weeds,  
 Might have been lost like thee ;  
 And that a hand which was not mine  
 Might then have chased his agony  
 As I another's—my heart bleeds  
 For thine.

"Sleep, sleep, and with the slumber of  
 The dead and the unborn  
 Forget thy life and love ;  
 Forget that thou must wake for ever ;  
 Forget the world's dull scorn ;  
 Forget lost health, and the divine  
 Feelings which died in youth's brief  
 morn ;  
 And forget me, for I can never  
 Be thine.

"Like a cloud big with a May shower,  
 My soul weeps healing rain  
 On thee, thou withered flower ;  
 It breathes mute music on thy sleep ;  
 Its odour calms thy brain !  
 Its light within thy gloomy breast  
 Spreads like a second youth again.  
 By mine thy being is to its deep  
 Possessed.

"The spell is done! How feel you  
 now ?"

"Better—Quite well," replied  
 The sleeper,—“What would do  
 You good when suffering and awake ?  
 What cure your head and side ?”—  
 “I would kill me what would cure my  
 pain ;  
 And as I must on earth abide  
 Awhile, yet tempt me not to break  
 My chain.”

### LINES

WHEN the lamp is shattered,  
 The light in the dust lies dead—  
 When the cloud is scattered,  
 The rainbow's glory is shed.  
 When the lute is broken,  
 Sweet tones are remembered not ;  
 When the lips have spoken,  
 Loved accents are soon forgot.

As music and splendour  
 Survive not the lamp and the lute,  
 The heart's echoes render  
 No song when the spirit is mute :—  
 No song but sad dirges,  
 Like the wind through a ruined cell,  
 Or the mournful surges  
 That ring the dead seaman's knell.

When hearts have once mingled,  
 Love first leaves the well-built nest ;  
 The weak one is singled  
 To endure what it once possessed.  
 O, Love ! who bewailest  
 The frailty of all things here,  
 Why choose you the frailest  
 For your cradle, your home, and your  
 bier ?

Its passions will rock thee,  
 As the storms rock the ravens on high  
 Bright reason will mock thee,  
 Like the sun from a wintry sky.  
 From thy nest every rafter  
 Will rot, and thine eagle home  
 Leave thee naked to laughter,  
 When leaves fall and cold winds come.

### WITH A GUITAR, TO JANE

ARIEL to Miranda :—Take  
 This slave of music, for the sake

Of him, who is the slave of thee ;  
 And teach it all the harmony  
 In which thou canst, and only thou,  
 Make the delighted spirit glow,  
 Till joy denies itself again,  
 And, too intense, is turned to pain.  
 For by permission and command  
 Of thine own Prince Ferdinand,  
 Poor Ariel sends this silent token  
 Of more than ever can be spoken ;  
 Your guardian spirit, Ariel, who  
 From life to life must still pursue  
 Your happiness, for thus alone  
 Can Ariel ever find his own ;  
 From Prospero's enchanted cell,  
 As the mighty verses tell,  
 To the throne of Naples he  
 Lit you o'er the trackless sea,  
 Flitting on, your prow before,  
 Like a living meteor.  
 When you die, the silent Moon,  
 In her interlunar swoon,  
 Is not sadder in her cell  
 Than deserted Ariel ;  
 When you live again on earth,  
 Like an unseen Star of birth,  
 Ariel guides you o'er the sea  
 Of life from your nativity :  
 Many changes have been run  
 Since Ferdinand and you begun  
 Your course of love, and Ariel still  
 Has tracked your steps and served  
 your will  
 Now in humbler, happier lot,  
 This is all remembered not ;  
 And now, alas ! the poor sprite is  
 Imprisoned for some fault of his  
 In a body like a grave—  
 From you, he only dares to crave,  
 For his service and his sorrow,  
 A smile to-day, a song to-morrow.

The artist who this idol wrought,  
 To echo all harmonious thought,  
 Felled a tree, while on the steep  
 The woods were in their winter sleep,  
 Rocked in that repose divine  
 On the wind-swept Apennine ;  
 And dreaming, some of autumn past,  
 And some of spring approaching fast,  
 And some of April buds and showers,  
 And some of songs in July bowers,  
 And all of love ; and so this tree,—  
 O that such our death may be !—  
 Died in sleep, and felt no pain,  
 To live in happier form again :

From which, beneath Heaven's fairest star ;

The artist wrought this loved Guitar,  
 And taught it justly to reply,  
 To all who question skilfully,  
 In language gentle as thine own ,  
 Whispering in enamoured tone  
 Sweet oracles of woods and dells,  
 And summer winds in sylvan cells ;  
 For it had learnt all harmonies  
 Of the plains and of the skies,  
 Of the forests and the mountains,  
 And the many voiced fountains ;  
 The clearest echoes of the hills,  
 The softest notes of falling rills,  
 The melodies of bird, and bees,  
 The murmuring of summer seas,  
 And pattering rain, and breathing  
 dew,

And airs of evening ; and it knew  
 That seldom-heard mysterious sound,  
 Which, driven on its diurnal round  
 As it floats through boundless day,  
 Our world enkindles on its way—  
 All this it knows, but will not tell  
 To those who cannot question well  
 The spirit that inhabits it ;  
 It talks according to the wit  
 Of its companions ; and no more  
 Is heard than has been felt before,  
 By those who tempt it to betray  
 These secrets of an elder day.  
 But, sweetly as its answers will  
 Flatter hands of perfect skill,  
 It keeps its highest, holiest tone  
 For our beloved friend alone.

#### FRAGMENTS OF AN UNFINISHED DRAMA

THE following fragments are part of a Drama, undertaken for the amusement of the individuals who composed our intimate society, but left unfinished. I have preserved a sketch of the story as far as it had been shadowed in the poet's mind.

An Enchantress, living in one of the islands of the Indian Archipelago, saves the life of a Pirate, a man of savage but noble nature. She becomes enamoured of him ; and he, inconstant to his mortal love, for a while returns her passion ; but at length, recalling the memory of her whom he left, and who laments his loss, he escapes from the enchanted island and returns to his lady. His mode of life makes him again go to sea, and the Enchantress seizes the opportunity to

bring him, by a spirit-brewed tempest,  
back to her island.

*Scene, before the Cavern of the Indian  
Enchantress.*

*The Enchantress comes forth.*

ENCHANTRESS.

He came like a dream in the dawn of  
life,

He fled like a shadow before its  
noon;

He is gone, and my peace is turned to  
strife,

And I wander and wane like the  
weary moon.

O sweet Echo, wake,

And for my sake

Make answer the while my heart shall  
break!

But my heart has a music which  
Echo's lips,

Though tender and true, yet can  
answer not,

And the shadow that moves in the  
soul's eclipse

Can return not the kiss by his now  
forgot;

Sweet lips! he who hath

On my desolate path

Cast the darkness of absence, worse  
than death!

*The Enchantress makes her spell; she  
is answered by a Spirit.*

*Spirit.* Within the silent centre of  
the earth

My mansion is; where I have lived  
insphered

From the beginning, and around my  
sleep

Have woven all the wondrous imagery  
Of this dim spot, which mortals call  
the world

Infinite depths of unknown elements  
Massed into one impenetrable mask;  
Sheets of immeasurable fire, and veins  
Of gold, and stone, and adamantine  
iron.

And as a veil in which I walk through  
Heaven

I have wrought mountains, seas,  
waves, and clouds,

And lastly light, whose interfusion  
dawns

In the dark space of interstellar air.

A good Spirit, who watches over the  
Pirate's fate, leads, in a mysterious  
manner, the lady of his love to the En-  
chanted Isle. She is accompanied by  
a youth, who loves her, but whose pas-  
sion she returns only with a sisterly affec-  
tion. The ensuing scene takes place  
between them on their arrival at the  
Isle.

INDIAN YOUTH AND LADY

*Indian.* And if my grief should  
still be dearer to me

Than all the pleasures in the world  
beside,

Why would you lighten it?—

*Lady.* I offer only

That which I seek, some human sym-  
pathy

In this mysterious island.

*Indian.* Oh! my friend,

My sister, my beloved! What do I  
say?

My brain is dizzy, and I scarce know  
whether

I speak to thee or her.

*Lady.* Peace, perturbed heart!

I am to thee only as thou to mine,  
The passing wind which heals the

brow at noon,

And may strike cold into the breast  
at night,

Yet cannot linger where it soothes  
the most,

Or long soothe could it linger.

*Indian.* But you said

You also loved?

*Lady.* Loved! Oh, I love.—

Methinks

This world of love is fit for all the world,  
And that for gentle hearts another

name

Would speak of gentler thoughts than  
the world owns.

I have loved.

*Indian.* And thou lovest not?

If so

Young as thou art, thou canst afford  
to weep.

*Lady.* Oh! would that I could

claim exemption

From all the bitterness of that sweet  
name.

I loved, I love, and when I love no  
more

Let joys and grief perish, and leave  
despair

To ring the knell of youth. He stood  
 beside me;  
 The embodied vision of the brightest  
 dream,  
 Which like a dawn heralds the day of  
 life;  
 The shadow of his presence made my  
 world  
 A paradise. All familiar things he  
 touched,  
 All common words he spoke, became  
 to me  
 Like forms and sounds of a diviner  
 world.  
 He was as is the sun in his fierce youth,  
 As terrible and lovely as a tempest;  
 He came, and went, and left me what  
 I am.  
 Alas! Why must I think how oft  
 we two  
 Have sat together near the river  
 springs,  
 Under the green pavilion which the  
 willow  
 Spreads on the floor of the unbroken  
 mountain, [there,  
 Strewn by the nurslings that linger  
 Over that islet paved with flowers  
 and moss,  
 While the musk-rose leaves, like  
 flakes of crimson snow,  
 Showered on us, and the dove mourned  
 in the pine,  
 Sad prophetic of sorrows not her own.  
*Indian.* Your breath is like soft  
 music, your words are  
 The echoes of a voice which on my  
 heart  
 Sleeps like a melody of early days.  
 But as you said—  
*Lady.* He was so awful, yet  
 So beautiful in mystery and terror,  
 Calming me as the loveliness of hea-  
 ven  
 Soothes the unquiet sea:—and yet  
 not so,  
 For he seemed stormy, and would  
 often seem  
 A quenchless sun masked in porten-  
 tuous clouds;  
 For such his thoughts, and even his  
 actions were;  
 But he was not of them, nor they of  
 him,  
 But as they hid his splendour from  
 the earth.

S.P.

Some said he was a man of blood and  
 peril,  
 And steeped in bitter infamy to the  
 lips.  
 More need was there I should be inno-  
 cent;  
 More need that I should be most true  
 and kind;  
 And much more need that there  
 should be found one  
 To share remorse, and scorn, and soli-  
 tude,  
 And all the ills that wait on those who  
 do  
 The tasks of ruin in the world of life.  
 He fled, and I have followed him.  
*Indian.* Such a one  
 Is he who was the winter of my peace.  
 But, fairest stranger, when didst thou  
 depart  
 From the far hills, where rise the  
 springs of India,  
 How didst thou pass the intervening  
 sea?  
*Lady.* If I be sure I am not dream-  
 ing now,  
 I should not doubt to say it was a  
 dream.

## A SONG

A widow bird sate mourning for her  
 love  
 Upon a wintry bough;  
 The frozen wind crept on above,  
 The freezing stream below.  
 There was no leaf upon the forest bare,  
 No flower upon the ground,  
 And little motion in the air  
 Except the mill-wheel's sound.

## TO JANE—THE INVITATION

BEST and brightest, come away,  
 Fairer far than this fair day,  
 Which like thee to those in sorrow,  
 Comes to bid a sweet good-morrow  
 To the rough year just awake  
 In its cradle on the brake.  
 The brightest hour of unborn spring,  
 Through the winter wandering,  
 Found it seems the halcyon morn,  
 To hark February born;  
 Bending from Heaven, in azure mirth,  
 It kissed the forehead of the earth,

G G



And smiled upon the silent sea,  
 And bade the frozen streams be free ;  
 And waked to music all their foun-  
 tains,  
 And breathed upon the frozen moun-  
 tains,  
 And like a prophetess of May,  
 Strewed flowers upon the barren way,  
 Making the wintry world appear  
 Like one on whom thou smilest, dear.

Away, away, from men and towns,  
 To the wild wood and the downs—  
 To the silent wilderness  
 Where the soul need not repress  
 Its music, lest it should not find  
 An echo in another's mind,  
 While the touch of Nature's art  
 Harmonizes heart to heart.  
 I leaves this notice on my door  
 For each accustomed visitor :—  
 " I am gone into the fields  
 To take what this sweet hour yields :—  
 Reflection, you may come to-mor-  
 row,  
 Sit by the fireside of Sorrow.—  
 You with the unpaid bill, Despair,  
 You, tiresome verse-reciter, Care,  
 I will pay you in the grave,  
 Death will listen to your stave.—  
 Expectation too, be off !  
 To-day is for itself enough ;  
 Hope in pity mock not woe  
 With smiles, nor follow where I go ;  
 Long having lived on thy sweet food,  
 At length I find one moment good  
 After long pain—with all your love,  
 This you never told me of."

Radiant Sister of the Day,  
 Awake ! arise ! and come away !  
 To the wild woods and the plains,  
 To the pools where winter rains  
 Image all their roof of leaves,  
 Where the pine its garland weaves  
 Of sapless green, and ivy dun,  
 Round stems that never kiss the sun,  
 Where the lawns and pastures be  
 And the sandhills of the sea,  
 Where the melting hoar-frost wets  
 The daisy-star that never sets,  
 And wind-flowers and violets,  
 Which yet join not scent to hue,  
 Crown the pale year weak and new ;  
 When the night is left behind  
 In the deep east, dim and blind,

And the blue noon is over us,  
 And the multitudinous  
 Billows murmur at our feet,  
 Where the earth and ocean meet,  
 And all things seem only one,  
 In the universal sun. •

### THE ISLE

THERE was a little lowny islet  
 By anemone and violet,  
 Like mosaic, paven :  
 And its roof was flowers and leaves  
 Which the summer's breathe weaves,  
 Where nor sun nor showers nor breeze  
 Pierce the pines and tallest trees,  
 Each a gem engraven.  
 Girt by many an azure wave  
 With which the clouds and moun-  
 tains pave  
 A lake's blue chasm.

### TO JANE—THE RECOLLECTION

Now the last day of many days,  
 All beautiful and bright as thou,  
 The loveliest and the last, is dead,  
 Rise, Memory, and write its praise !  
 Up, do thy wonted work ! come, trace  
 The epitaph of glory fled,  
 For now the Earth has changed its  
 face,  
 A frown is on the Heaven's brow.

#### I

We wandered to the Pine Forest  
 That skirts the Ocean's foam,  
 The lightest wind was in its nest,  
 The tempest in its home.  
 The whispering waves were half asleep,  
 The clouds were gone to play,  
 And on the bosom of the deep,  
 The smile of Heaven lay ;  
 It seemed as if the hour were one  
 Sent from beyond the skies,  
 Which scattered from above the sun  
 A light of Paradise.

#### II

We paused amid the pines that stood  
 The giants of the waste,  
 Tortured by storms to shapes as rude  
 As serpents interlaced.  
 And soothed by every azure breath,  
 That under heaven is blown,  
 To harmonies and hues beneath,  
 As tender as its own ;

Now all the tree tops lay asleep,  
Like green waves on the sea,  
As still as in the silent deep  
The ocean woods may be.

## III

How calm it was!—the silence there  
By such a chain was bound,  
That even the busy woodpecker  
Made stiller by her sound  
The inviolable quietness ;  
The breath of peace we drew  
With its soft motion made not less  
The calm that round us grew.  
There seemed from the remotest seat  
Of the wide mountain waste,  
To the soft flower beneath our feet,  
A magic circle traced,  
A spirit interfused around  
A thrilling silent life,  
To momentary peace it bound  
Our mortal nature's strife ;—  
And still I felt the centre of  
The magic circle there,  
Was one fair form that filled with love  
The lifeless atmosphere.

## IV

We paused beside the pools that lie  
Under the forest bough,  
Each seemed as 'twere a little sky  
Gulfed in a world below ;  
A firmament of purple light,  
Which in the dark earth lay,  
More boundless than the depth of  
night,  
And purer than the day—  
In which the lovely forests grew,  
As in the upper air,  
More perfect both in shape and hue  
Than any spreading there.  
There lay the glade and neighbouring  
lawn,  
And through the dark-green wood  
The white sun twinkling like the  
dawn  
Out of a speckled cloud.  
Sweet views which in our world above  
Can never well be seen,  
Were imaged by the water's love  
Of that fair forest green.  
And all was interfused beneath  
With an Elysian glow,  
An atmosphere without a breath,  
A softer day below.

Like one beloved, the scene had lent  
To the dark water's breast,  
Its every leaf and lineament  
With more than truth expressed,  
Until an envious wind crept by,  
Like an unwelcome thought,  
Which from the mind's too faithful eye  
Blots one dear image out.  
Though thou art ever fair and kind,  
The forests ever green,  
Less oft is peace in Shelley's mind,  
Than calm in waters seen.

## A DIRGE

ROUGH wind, that moanest loud  
Grief too sad for song ;  
Wild wind, when sullen cloud  
Knells all the night long ;  
Sad storm, whose tears are vain,  
Bare woods, whose branches stain,  
Deep caves and dreary main,  
Wail, for the world's wrong !

## THE TRIUMPH OF LIFE

SWIFT as a spirit hastening to his task  
Of glory and of good, the Sun sprang  
forth  
Rejoicing in his splendour, and the  
mask

Of darkness fell from the awakened  
Earth—  
The smokeless altars of the mountain  
snows  
Flamed above crimson clouds, and at  
the birth

Of light, the Ocean's orison arose,  
To which the birds tempered their  
matin lay.  
All flowers in field or forest which un-  
close

Their trembling eyelids to the kiss of  
day,  
Swinging their censers in the element,  
With orient incense lit by the new ray

Burned slow and inconsumably, and  
sent  
Their odorous sighs up to the smiling  
air ;  
And, in succession due, did continent,

Isle, ocean, and all things that in them wear	As in that trance of wondrous thought I lay,
The form and character of mortal mould,	This was the tenour of my waking dream :—
Rise as the sun their father rose, to bear	Methought I sate beside a public way
Their portion of the toil, which he of old	Thick strewn with summer dust, and a great stream
Took as his own and then imposed on them ;	Of people there was hurrying to and fro,
But I, whom thoughts which must remain untold	Numerous as gnats upon the evening gleam,
Had kept as wakeful as the stars that gem	All hastening onward, yet none seemed to know
The cone of night, now they were laid asleep	Whither he went, or whence he came, or why
Stretched my faint limbs beneath the hoary stem	He made one of the multitude, and so
Which an old chaunt flung athwart the steep	Was borne amid the crowd, as through the sky
Of a green Apennine : before me fled The night ; behind me rose the day ; the deep	One of the million leaves of summer's bier ;
	Old age and youth, manhood and infancy,
Was at my feet, and Heaven above my head,	Mixed in one mighty torrent did appear :
When a strange trance over my fancy grew	Some flying from the thing they feared, and some
Which was not slumber, for the shade it spread	Seeking the object of another's fear ;
Was so transparent that the scene came through	And others as with steps towards the tomb,
As clear as, when a veil of light is drawn	Pored on the trodden worms that crawled beneath,
O'er evening hills, they glimmer ; and I knew	And others mournfully within the gloom
That I had felt the freshness of that dawn	Of their own shadow walked and called it death ;
Bathe in the same cold dew my brow and hair,	And some fled from it as it were a ghost,
And sate as thus upon that slope of lawn	Half fainting in the affliction of vain breath :
Under the selfsame bough, and heard as there	But more, with motions which each other crossed,
The birds, the fountains, and the ocean hold	Pursued or spurned the shadows the clouds threw
Sweet talk in music through the enamoured air,	Or birds within the noonday ether lost,
And then a vision on my brain was rolled.	Upon that path where flowers never grew,—

And weary with vain toil and faint for  
thirst,  
Heard not the fountains, whose melo-  
dious dew

Out of their mossy cells for ever burst ;  
Nor felt the breeze which from the  
forest told  
Of grassy paths and wood, lawn-  
interspersed,

With over-arching elms and caverns  
cold,  
And violet banks where sweet dreams  
brood, but they  
Pursued their serious folly as of old.

And as I gazed, methought that in  
the way  
The throng grew wilder, as the woods  
of June  
When the south wind shakes the ex-  
tinguished day,

And a cold glare intenser than the  
noon,  
But icy cold, obscured with blinding  
light  
The sun, as he the stars. Like the  
young moon

When on the sunlit limits of the night  
Her white shell trembles amid crim-  
son air,  
And whilst the sleeping tempest  
gathers might,

Doth, as the herald of its coming, bear  
The ghost of its dead mother, whose  
dim form  
Bends in dark ether from her infant's  
chair,—

So came a chariot on the silent storm  
Of its own rushing splendour, and a  
Shape  
So sate within, as one whom years  
deform,

Beneath a dusky hood and double  
cape,  
Crouching within the shadow of a  
tomb ;  
And o'er what seemed the head a  
cloud-like crape

Was bent, a dun and faint ethereal  
gloom

Tempering the light : upon the  
chariot beam

A Janus-visaged shadow did assume

The guidance of that wonder-winged  
team ;

The shapes which drew it in thick  
lightnings

Were lost :—I heard alone on the air's  
soft stream

The music of their ever-moving wings.  
All the four faces of that charioteer  
Had their eyes banded ; little profit  
brings

Speed in the van and blindness in the  
rear,

Nor then avail the beams that quench  
the sun

Or that with banded eyes could pierce  
the sphere

Of all that is, has been, or will be  
done ;

So ill was the car guided—but it  
passed

With solemn speed majestically on.

The crowd gave way, and I arose  
aghast,

Or seemed to rise, so mighty was the  
trance,

And saw like clouds upon the thun-  
der's blast,

The million with fierce song and  
maniac dance

Raging around—such seemed the  
jubilee

As when, to meet some conqueror's  
advance,

Imperial Rome poured forth her liv-  
ing sea

From senate-house, and forum, and  
theatre,

When [ ] upon the free

Had bound a yoke, which soon they  
stooped to bear.

Nor wanted here the just similitude  
Of a triumphal pageant, for where'er

The chariot rolled, a captive multi-  
tude

Was driven ;—all those who had  
grown old in power  
Or misery,—all who had their age  
subdued

By action or by suffering, and whose  
hour  
Was drained to its last sand in weal or  
woe,  
So that the trunk survived both fruit  
and flower :—

All those whose fame or infamy must  
grow  
Till the great winter lay the form and  
name  
Of this green earth with them for ever  
low ;—

All but the sacred few who could not  
tame  
Their spirits to the conquerors—but  
as soon  
As they had touched the world with  
living flame,

Fled back like eagles to their native  
noon,  
Or those who put aside the diadem  
Of earthly thrones or gems [ ]

Were there, of Athens or Jerusalem  
Were neither 'mid the mighty cap-  
tives seen,  
Nor 'mid the ribald crowd that fol-  
lowed them,

Nor those who went before fierce and  
obscene.  
The wild dance maddens in the van,  
and those  
Who lead it—fleet as shadows on the  
green,

Outspeed the chariot, and without  
repose  
Mix with each other in tempestuous  
measure  
To savage music, wilder as it grows,

They, tortured by their agonizing  
pleasure,  
Convulsed and on the rapid whirl-  
winds spun  
Of that fierce spirit whose unholy  
leisure

Was soothed by mischief since the  
world begun,—

Throw back their heads and loose  
their streaming hair ;  
And in their dance round her who  
dims the sun,

Maidens and youths fling their wild  
arms in air ;  
As their feet twinkle they recede, and  
now

Bending within each other's atmo-  
sphere

Kindle invisibly—and as they glow,  
Like moths by light attracted and  
repelled,  
Oft to their bright destruction come  
and go,

Till like two clouds into one vale im-  
pelled  
That shake the mountains when their  
lightnings mingle  
And die in rain—the fiery band which  
held

Their natures, snaps—the shock still  
may tingle,  
One falls and then another in the path  
Senseless—nor is the desolation  
single,

Yet ere I can say *where*—the chariot  
hath  
Passed over them, nor other trace I  
find

But as of foam after the ocean's  
wrath

Is spent upon the desert shore ;—be-  
hind,  
Old men and women foully disarrayed,  
Shake their grey hairs in the insulting  
wind,

And follow in the dance, with limbs  
decayed,  
Seeking to reach the light which  
leaves them still  
Farther behind and deeper in the  
shade.

But not the less with impotence of  
will  
They wheel, though ghastly shadows  
interpose

Round them and round each other,  
and fulfil

Their part, and in the dust from  
whence they rose  
Sink, and corruption veils them as  
they lie,  
And past in these performs what  
[ ] in those.

Struck to the heart by this sad page-  
antry,  
Half to myself I said—"And what  
is this ?  
Whose shape is that within the car ?  
And why"—

I would have added—"is all here  
amiss ?"—  
But a voice answered—"Life !"—I  
turned, and knew  
(O Heaven, have mercy on such  
wretchedness !)

That what I thought was an old root  
which grew  
To strange distortion out of the hill  
side,  
Was indeed one of those deluded  
crew,

And that the grass, which methought  
hung so wide  
And white, was but his thin dis-  
coloured hair,  
And that the holes it vainly sought to  
hide,

Were or had been eyes :—"If thou  
canst, forbear  
To join the dance, which I had well  
forborne !"  
Said the grim Feature (of my thought  
aware) ;

"I will unfold that which to this deep  
scorn  
Led me and my companions, and re-  
late  
The progress of the pageant since the  
morn ;

"If thirst of knowledge shall not then  
abate,  
Follow it thou even to the night,  
but I

Am weary."—Then like one who with  
the weight

Of his own words is staggered, wearily  
He paused ; and, ere he could resume,  
I cried,  
"First, who art thou ?"—"Before  
thy memory,

"I feared, loved, hated, suffered, did  
and died,  
And if the spark with which Heaven  
lit my spirit  
Had been with purer sentiment sup-  
plied,

"Corruption would not now thus  
much inherit  
Of what was once Rousseau,—nor  
this disguise  
Stained that which ought to have dis-  
dained to wear it ;

"If I have been extinguished, yet  
there rise  
A thousand beacons from the spark I  
bore"—  
"And who are those chained to the  
car ?"—"The wise,

"The great, the unforgotten,—they  
who wore  
Mitres and helmets and crowns, or  
wreaths of light,  
Signs of thought's empire over  
thought—their lore

"Taught them not this, to know  
themselves ; their might  
Could not repress the mystery within,  
And for the morn of truth they  
feigned, deep night

"Caught them ere evening."—"Who  
is he with chin  
Upon his breast, and hands crossed  
on his chain ?"—  
"The child of a fierce hour ; he sought  
to win

"The world, and lost all that it did  
contain  
Of greatness, in its hope destroyed ;  
and more  
Of fame and peace than virtue's self  
can gain

"Without the opportunity which bore  
Him on his eagle pinions to the peak  
From which a thousand climbers have  
before

"Fallen, as Napoleon fell."—I felt  
my cheek  
Alter to see the shadow pass away,  
Whose grasp had left the giant world  
so weak,

That every pigmy kicked it as it lay;  
And much I grieved to think how  
power and will  
In opposition rule our mortal day,

And why God made irreconcilable  
Good and the means of good; and for  
despair  
I half disdained mine eyes' desire to  
fill

With the spent vision of the times  
that were  
And scarce have ceased to be.—"Dost  
thou behold,"  
Said my guide, "those spoilers  
spoiled, Voltaire,

"Frederick, and Paul, Catherine, and  
Leopold,  
And hoary anarchists, demagogues, and  
sage—  
—names which the world thinks  
always old?

"For in the battle life and they did  
wage,  
She remained conqueror. I was  
overcome  
By my own heart alone, which neither  
age,

"Nor tears, nor infamy, nor now the  
tomb  
Could temper to its object."—"Let  
them pass,"  
I cried, "the world and its mysteri-  
ous doom

"Is not so much more glorious than it  
was,  
That I desire to worship those who  
drew  
New figures on its false and fragile  
glass

"As the old faded."—"Figures ever  
new  
Rise on the bubble, paint them as  
you may;  
We have but thrown, as those before  
us threw,

"Our shadows on it as it passed away.  
But mark how chained to the trium-  
phal chair  
The mighty phantoms of an elder day;

"All that is mortal of great Plato  
there  
Expiates the joy and woe his master  
knew not:  
The star that ruled his doom was far  
too fair,

"And life, where long that flower of  
Heaven grew not,  
Conquered that heart by love, which  
gold, or pain,  
Or age, or sloth, or slavery could sub-  
due not.

"And near him walk the [       ]  
twain,  
The tutor and his pupil, whom Do-  
minion  
Followed as tame as vulture in a  
chain.

"The world was darkened beneath  
either pinion  
Of him whom from the flock of con-  
querors  
Fame singled out for her thunder-  
bearing minion;

"The other long outlived both woes  
and wars,  
Throned in the thoughts of men, and  
still had kept  
The jealous key of truth's eternal  
doors,

"If Bacon's eagle spirit had not leapt  
Like lightning out of darkness—he  
compelled  
The Proteus shape of Nature as it  
slept

"To wake, and lead him to the caves  
that held

The treasure of the secrets of its reign.

See the great bards of elder time,  
who quelled

"The passions which they sung, as  
by their strain

May well be known: their living  
melody

Tempers its own contagion to the vein

"Of those who are infected with it—I  
Have suffered what I wrote, or viler  
pain.

And so my words have seeds of mis-  
ery!"——

[There is a chasm here in the MS. which it  
is impossible to fill up. It appears from  
the context, that other shapes pass, and  
that Rousseau still stood beside the  
dreamer, as]

—— he pointed to a company,  
'Midst whom I quickly recognised the  
heirs

Of Cæsar's crime, from him to Con-  
stantine;

The anarch chiefs, whose force and  
murderous snares

Had founded many a sceptre-bearing  
line,

And spread the plague of gold and  
blood abroad:

And Gregory and John, and men di-  
vine,

Who rose like shadows between  
man and God;

Till that eclipse, still hanging over  
heaven,

Was worshipped by the world o'er  
which they strode,

For the true sun it quenched—  
"Their power was given

But to destroy," replied the leader:—  
"I

Am one of those who have created,  
even

If it be but a world of agony."——

"Whence comest thou? and whither  
goest thou?

How did thy course begin?" I said,  
"and why?

"Mine eyes are sick of this perpetual  
flow

Of people, and my heart sick of one  
sad thought—

Speak!"——"Whence I am, I partly  
seem to know,

"And how and by what paths I have  
been brought

To this dread pass, methinks even  
thou mayst guess;—

Why this should be, my mind can  
compass not;

"Whither the conqueror hurries me,  
still less;—

But follow thou, and from spectator  
turn

Actor or victim in this wretchedness,

"And what thou wouldst be taught I  
then may learn

From thee. Now listen:—In the  
April prime,

When all the forest tips began to burn

"With kindling green, touched by  
the azure clime

Of the young year's dawn, I was laid  
asleep

Under a mountain, which from un-  
known time

"Had yawned into a cavern, high  
and deep;

And from it came a gentle rivulet,  
Whose water, like clear air, in its  
calm sweep

"Bent the soft grass, and kept for  
ever wet

The stems of the sweet flowers, and  
filled the grove

With sounds, which whoso hears  
must needs forget

"All pleasure and all pain, all hate  
and love,

Which they had known before that  
hour of rest;

A sleeping mother then would dream  
not of

"Her only child who died upon her  
breast



At eventide—a king would mourn no  
more

The crown of which his brows were  
dispossessed

“When the sun lingered o’er his  
ocean floor  
To gild his rival’s new prosperity.  
Thou wouldst forget thus vainly to  
deplore

“Ills, which if ill can find no cure  
from thee,  
The thought of which no other sleep  
will quell,  
Nor other music blot from memory,

“So sweet and deep is the oblivious  
spell;  
And whether life had been before that  
sleep  
The heaven which I imagine, or a hell

“Like this harsh world in which I  
wake to weep,  
I know not. I arose, and for a space  
The scene of woods and waters seem  
to keep,

“Though it was now broad day, a  
gentle trace  
Of light diviner than the common sun  
Sheds on the common earth, and all  
the place

“Was filled with magic sounds woven  
into one  
Oblivious melody, confusing sense  
Amid the gliding waves and shadows  
dun;

“And, as I looked, the bright omni-  
presence  
Of morning through the orient cavern  
flowed,  
And the sun’s image radiantly in-  
tense

“Burned on the waters of the well  
that glowed  
Like gold, and threaded all the for-  
est’s maze  
With winding paths of emerald fire;  
there stood

“Amid the sun,—as he amid the  
blaze

Of his own glory, on the vibrating  
floor of the fountain paved with  
flashing rays,—

“A Shape all light, which with one  
hand did sling  
Dew on the earth, as if she were the  
dawn,  
And the invisible rain did ever sing

“A silver music on the mossy lawn;  
And still before me on the dusky  
grass,  
Iris her many-coloured scarf had  
drawn:

“In her right hand she bore a crystal  
glass,  
Mantling with bright Nepenthe; the  
fierce splendour  
Fell from her as she moved under  
the mass

“Out of the deep cavern, with palms  
so tender,  
Their tread broke not the mirror of  
its billow;  
She glided along the river, and did  
bend her

“Head under the dark boughs, till,  
like a willow,  
Her fair hair swept the bosom of the  
stream  
That whispered with delight to be its  
pillow.

“As one enamoured is upborne in  
dream  
O’er lily-paven lakes ’mid silver mist,  
To wondrous music, so this shape  
might seem

“Partly to tread the waves with feet  
which kissed  
The dancing foam; partly to glide  
along  
The air which roughened the moist  
amethyst,

“Or the faint morning beams that fell  
among  
The trees, or the soft shadows of the  
trees;

And her feet, ever to the ceaseless  
song

"Of leaves, and winds, and waves,  
and birds, and bees,  
And falling drops moved to a measure  
new,  
Yet sweet, as on the summer evening  
breeze,

"Up from the lake a shape of golden  
dew  
Between two rocks, athwart the ris-  
ing moon,  
Dances i' the wind, where never eagle  
flew ;

"And still her feet, no less than the  
sweet tune  
To which they moved, seemed as they  
moved to blot  
The thoughts of him who gazed on  
them ; and soon

"All that was, seemed as if it had  
been not ;  
And all the gazer's mind was strewn  
beneath  
Her feet like embers ; and she, thought  
by thought,

"Trampled its sparks into the dust of  
death,  
As day upon the threshold of the east  
Treads out the lamps of night, until  
the breath

"Of darkness re-illumine even the  
least  
Of heaven's living eyes !—like day she  
came,  
Making the night a dream ; and ere  
she ceased

"To move, as one between desire and  
shame  
Suspended, I said—' If, as it doth  
seem,  
Thou comest from the realm without  
a name,

"' Into this valley of perpetual dream  
Show whence I came, and where I  
am, and why—'  
Pass not away upon the passing  
'stream.'

" ' Arise and quench thy thirst,' was  
her reply,  
And as a shut lily, stricken by the  
wand  
Of dewy morning's vital alchemy,

"I rose ; and, bending at her sweet  
command,  
Touched with faint lips the cup she  
raised,  
And suddenly my brain became as  
sand,

"Where the first wave had more than  
half erased  
The track of deer on desert Labrador ;  
Whilst the wolf, from which they fled  
amazed,

"Leaves his stamp visibly upon the  
shore,  
Until the second bursts ;—so on my  
sight  
Burst a new vision, never seen before,

"And the fair shape waned in the  
coming light,  
As veil by veil the silent splendour  
drops  
From Lucifer, amid the chrysolite

"Of sunrise, ere it tinge the moun-  
tain tops ;  
And as the presence of that fairest  
planet,  
Although unseen, is felt by one who  
hopes

"That his day's path may end, as he  
began it,  
In that star's smile, whose light is like  
the scent  
Of a jonquil when evening breezes fan  
it,

"Or the soft note in which his dear  
lament  
The Brescian shepherd breathes, or  
the caress  
That turned his weary slumber to  
content ;<sup>1</sup>

"So knew I in that light's severe  
excess

<sup>1</sup> The favourite song, "Stanco di pascelar le pecorelle," is a Brescian national air.

<p>The presence of that shape which on the stream Moved, as I moved along the wilder- ness,</p>	<p>Forgetful of the chariot's swift ad- vance ;</p>
<p>" More dimly than a day-appearing dream, The ghost of a forgotten form of sleep ; A light of heaven, whose half-extin- guished beam</p>	<p>" Others stood gazing, till within the shade Of the great mountain its light left them dim ; Others outspeeded it ; and others made</p>
<p>" Through the sick day in which we wake to weep, Glimmers, for ever sought, for ever lost ; So did that shape its obscure tenour keep</p>	<p>" Circles around it, like the clouds that swim Round the high moon in a bright sea of air ; And more did follow, with exulting hymn,</p>
<p>" Beside my path, as silent as a ghost ; But the new Vision, and the cold bright car, With solemn speed and stunning music, crossed</p>	<p>" The chariot and the captives fet- tered there ; But all like bubbles on an eddying flood Fell into the same track at last, and were</p>
<p>" The forest, and as if from some dread war Triumphantly returning, the loud million Fiercely extolled the fortune of her star.</p>	<p>" Borne onward. I among the multi- tude Was swept—me, sweetest flowers delayed not long ; Me, not the shadow nor the solitude ;</p>
<p>" A moving arch of victory, the ver- milion And green and azure plumes of Iris had Built high over her wind-winged pavilion,</p>	<p>" Me, not that falling stream's Le- thean song ; Me, not the phantom of that early form, Which moved upon its motion—but among</p>
<p>" And underneath ethereal glory clad The wilderness, and far before her flew The tempest of the splendour, which forbade</p>	<p>" The thickest billows of that living storm I plunged, and bared my bosom to the clime Of that cold light, whose airs too soon deform.</p>
<p>" Shadow to fall from leaf and stone ; the crew Seemed in that light, like atomies to dance Within a sunbeam ;—some upon the new</p>	<p>" Before the chariot had begun to climb The opposing steep of that mysterious dell, Behold a wonder worthy of the rhymæ</p>
<p>" Embroidery of flowers, that did en- hance The grassy vesture of the desert, played,</p>	<p>" Of him who from the lowest depths of hell, Through every paradise and through all glory, Love led serene, and who returned to tell</p>

" The words of hate and care ; the  
wondrous story  
How all things are transfigured ex-  
cept Love ;  
(For deaf as is a sea, which wrath  
makes hoary,

" The world can hear not the sweet  
notes that move  
The sphere whose light is melody to  
(lovers)  
A wonder worthy of his rhyme—the  
grove

" Grew dense with shadows to its in-  
most covers,  
The earth was grey with phantoms,  
and the air  
Was peopled with dim forms, as when  
there hovers

" A flock of vampire-bats before the  
glare  
Of the tropic sun, bringing, ere even-  
ing,  
Strange night upon some Indian vale :  
—thus were

" Phantoms diffused around ; and  
some did fling  
Shadows of shadows, yet unlike them-  
selves,  
Behind them ; some like caglets on  
the wing

" Were lost in the white day ; others  
like elves  
Danced in a thousand unimagined  
shapes  
Upon the sunny streams and grassy  
shelves ;

" And others sate chattering like rest-  
less apes  
On vulgar hands, [ ]  
Some made a cradle of the ermined  
capés

" Of kingly mantles ; some across the  
tire  
Of pontiffs rode, like demons ; others  
played  
Under the crown which girt with  
empire

" A baby's or an idiot's brow, and  
made  
Their nests in it. The old anatomies  
Sate hatching their bare broods under  
the shade

" Of demon wings, and laughed from  
their dead eyes  
To re-assume the delegated power,  
Arrayed in which those worms did  
monarchise,

" Who made this earth their charnel.  
Others more  
Humble, like falcons, sat upon the fist  
Of common men, and round their  
heads did soar ;

" Or like small gnats and flies, as  
thick as mist  
On evening marshes, thronged about  
the brow  
Of lawyers, statesmen, priest, and  
theorist ;—

" And others, like discoloured flakes  
of snow  
On fairest bosoms and the sunniest  
hair,  
Fell, and were melted by the youthful  
glow

" Which they extinguished ; and, like  
tears, they were  
A veil to those from whose faint lids  
they rained  
In drops of sorrow. I became aware

" Of whence those forms proceeded  
which thus stained  
The track in which we moved. After  
brief space,  
From every form the beauty slowly  
waned ;

" From every firmest limb and fairest  
face  
The strength and freshness fell like  
dust, and left  
The action and the shape without the  
grace

" Of life. The marble brow of youth  
was cleft  
With care ; and in those eyes where  
once hope shone,  
Desire, like a lioness bereft

"Of her last cub, glared ere it died ;  
each one  
Of that great crowd sent forth  
incessantly  
These shadows, numerous as the dead  
leaves blown

In autumn evening from a poplar  
tree,  
Each like himself and like each other  
were  
At first ; but some distorted seemed  
to be,—

"Obscure clouds, moulded by the  
casual air ;  
And of this stuff the car's creative ray  
Wrapt all the busy phantoms that  
were there,

"As the sun shapes the clouds. Thus  
on the way  
Mask after mask fell from the coun-  
tenance  
And form of all ; and long before the  
day

"Was old, the joy which waked like  
heaven's glance  
The sleepers in the oblivious valley  
died ;  
And some grew weary of the ghastly  
dance,

"And fell, as I have fallen, by the  
wayside ;—  
Those soonest from whose forms most  
shadows passed,  
And least of strength and beauty did  
abide."

"Then, what is life ? " I cried.—

#### TO JANE

THE keen stars were twinkling,  
And the fair moon was rising among  
them,

Dear Jane !

The guitar was tinkling,  
But the notes were not sweet till you  
• sung them  
Again.

'As the moon's soft splendour

O'er the faint cold starlight of heaven  
Is thrown,  
So your voice most tender  
To the strings without soul had then  
given  
Its own.

The stars will awaken,  
Though the moon sleep a full hour  
later,  
To-night ;  
No leaf will be shaken  
Whilst the dews of your melody scat-  
ter  
Delight.

Though the sound overpowers,  
Sing again, with your dear voice re-  
vealing  
A tone  
Of some world far from ours,  
Where music and moonlight and feel-  
ing  
Are one.

#### LINES WRITTEN IN THE BAY OF LERICI

SHE left me at the silent time  
When the moon had ceased to climb  
The azure path of heaven's steep,  
And, like an albatross asleep,  
Balanced on her wings of light,  
Hovered in the purple night,  
Ere she sought her ocean nest  
In the chambers of the west.  
She left me ; and I stayed alone,  
Thinking over every tone,  
Which, though silent to the ear,  
The enchanted heart could hear,  
Like notes which die when born, but  
still

Haunt the echoes of the hill,  
And feeling ever—Oh, too much !—  
The soft vibration of her touch,  
As if her gentle hand even now  
Lightly trembled on my brow.  
And thus, although she absent were,  
Memory gave me all of her  
That even Fancy dares to claim.  
Her presence had made weak and  
tame  
All passions, and I lived alone  
In the time which is our own ;  
The past and future were forgot,  
As they had been, and would be, not.

But soon, the guardian angel gone,  
The dæmon reassumed his throne  
In my faint heart. I dare not speak  
My thoughts ; but thus disturbed and  
weak

I sat, and saw the vessels glide  
Over the ocean bright and wide,  
Like spirit-winged chariots sent  
O'er some serenest element  
For ministrations strange and far,  
As is to some Elysian star  
They sailed for drink to medicine  
Such sweet and bitter pain as mine.  
And the wind that winged their flight

From the land came fresh and light ;  
And the scent of winged flowers,  
And the coolness of the hours  
Of dew, and sweet warmth left by day,  
Were scattered o'er the twinkling bay ;  
And the fisher, with his lamp  
And spear, about the low rocks damp  
Crept, and struck the fish which came  
To worship the delusive flame.  
Too happy they, whose pleasure  
sought

Extinguishes all sense and thought  
Of the regret that pleasure leaves,—  
Destroying life alone, not peace !

FRAGMENTS<sup>1</sup>

I  
TO —

HERE, my dear friend, is a new book  
for you ;  
I have already dedicated two  
To other friends, one female and one  
male,  
What you are, is a thing that I must  
veil ;  
What can this be to those who praise  
or rail  
I never was attached to that great sect  
Whose doctrine is that each one  
should select  
Out of the world a mistress or a friend,  
And all the rest, though fair and wise,  
commend  
To cold oblivion—though it is the  
code  
Of modern morals, and the beaten  
road  
Which those poor slaves with weary  
footsteps tread  
Who travel to their home among the  
dead,  
By the broad highway of the world—  
and so

With one sad friend, and many a  
jealous foe,  
The dreariest and the longest journey  
go.

Free love has this, different from gold  
and clay  
That to divide is not to take away.  
Like ocean, which the general north  
wind breaks  
Into ten thousand waves, and each  
one makes  
A mirror of the moon ; like some great  
glass,  
Which did distort whatever form  
might pass,  
Dashed into fragments by a playful  
child,  
Which then reflects its eyes and fore-  
head mild,  
Giving for one, which it could ne'er  
express,  
A thousand images of loveliness.

If I were one whom the loud world  
held wise,  
I should disdain to quote authorities

<sup>1</sup> These fragments do not properly belong to the poems of 1822. They are gleanings from Shelley's manuscript books and papers ; preserved not only because they are beautiful in themselves, but as affording indications of his feelings and virtues.

In the support of this kind of love ;—  
 Why there is first the God in heaven  
 above,  
 Who wrote a book called Nature, 'tis  
 to be  
 Reviewed I hear in the next *Quarterly* ;  
 And Socrates, the Jesus Christ of  
 Greece ;  
 And Jesus Christ himself did never  
 cease  
 To urge all living things to love each  
 other,  
 And to forgive their mutual faults,  
 and smother  
 The Devil of disunion in their souls.

\* \* \*

It is a sweet thing, friendship, a dear  
 balm,  
 A happy and auspicious bird of calm,  
 Which rides o'er life's ever tumultu-  
 ous Ocean ;  
 A God that broods o'er chaos in com-  
 motion ;  
 A flower which fresh as Lapland roses  
 are,  
 Lifts its bold head into the world's  
 pure air,  
 And blooms most radiantly when  
 others die,  
 Health, hope, and youth, and brief  
 prosperity  
 And, with the light and odour of its  
 bloom,  
 Shining within the dungeon and the  
 tomb ;  
 Whose coming is as light and music  
 are  
 'Mid dissonance and gloom—a star  
 Which moves not 'mid the moving  
 heavens alone,  
 A smile among dark frowns—a gentle  
 tone  
 Among rude voices, a beloved light,  
 A solitude, a refuge, a delight.

If I had but a friend ! why I have  
 three,  
 Even by my own confession ; there  
 may be  
 Some more, for what I know ; for 'tis  
 my mind  
 To call my friends all who are wise and  
 kind,  
 And these, Heaven knows, at best  
 are very few,

But none can ever be more dear than  
 you.  
 Why should they be ? my muse has  
 lost her wings,  
 Or, like a dying swan, who soars and  
 sings,  
 I should describe you in heroic style,  
 But as it is—are you not void of guile ?  
 A lovely soul, formed to be blessed  
 and bless ;  
 A well of sealed and secret happiness ;  
 A lute, which those whom love has  
 taught to play  
 Make music on, to cheer the roughest  
 day ?

\* \* \*

## II

### TO WILLIAM SHELLEY

Thy little footsteps on the sands  
 Of a remote and lonely shore ;  
 The twinkling of thine infant hands  
 Where now the worm will feed no  
 more ;  
 Thy mingled look of love and glee  
 When we returned to gaze on  
 thee.

## III

And who feels discord now or sorrow ;  
 Love is the universe to-day—  
 These are the slaves of dim to-  
 morrow,  
 Darkening Life's labyrinthine way.

## IV

A GENTLE story of two lovers young,  
 Who met in innocence and died in  
 sorrow,  
 And of one selfish heart, whose ran-  
 cour clung  
 Like curses on them ; are ye slow to  
 borrow  
 The lore of truth from such a  
 tale ?  
 Or in this world's deserted vale,  
 Do ye not see a star of gladness  
 Pierce the shadows of its sadness,  
 When ye are cold, that love is a light  
 sent  
 From heaven, which none shall  
 quench, to cheer the innocent ?

## V

I AM drunk with the honey wine  
 Of the moon-unfolded eglantine,.

Which fairies catch in hyacinth  
buds :—

The bats, the dormice, and the moles  
Sleep in the walls or under the sword  
Of the desolate Castle yard ;  
And when 'tis spilt on the summer  
earth,

Or its fumes arise among the dew,  
Their jocund dreams are full of mirth,  
They gibber their joy in sleep ; for few  
Of the fairies bear those bowls so new !

## VI

YE gentle visitations of calm  
thought—

Moods like the memories of happier  
earth,

Which come arrayed in thoughts of  
little worth,

Like stars in clouds by the weak  
winds enwrought,

But that the clouds depart and  
stars remain,

While they remain, and ye, alas,  
depart !

## VII

THE world is dreary,

And I am weary

Of wandering on without thee, Mary ;

A joy was erewhile

In thy voice and thy smile,

And 'tis gone, when I should be gone  
too, Mary.

1819.

## VIII

MY dearest Mary, wherefore hast  
thou gone,

And left me in this dreary world  
alone !

Thy form is here indeed—a lovely  
one—

But thou art fled, gone down the  
dreary road,

That leads to Sorrow's most obscure  
abode ;

Thou sittest on the hearth of pale  
despair,

Where

For thine own sake I cannot follow  
thee.

1819. .

## IX

WHEN a lover clasps his fairest,  
Then be our dread sport the rarest.

S.P.

Their caresses were like the chaff  
In the tempest, and be our laugh  
His despair—her epitaph !

When a mother clasps her child,  
Watch till dusty Death has piled  
His cold ashes on the clay ;  
She has loved it many a day—  
Shè remains,—it fades away.

## X

ONE sung of thee who left the tale  
untold,

Like the false dawns which perish in  
the bursting :

Like empty cups of wrought and dæ-  
dal gold,

Which mock the lips with air, when  
they are thirsting.

## XI

AND where is truth ? On tombs ? for  
such to thee

Has been my heart—and thy dead  
memory

Has lain from childhood, many a  
changeable year—

Unchangingly preserved and buried  
there.

## XII

IN the cave which wild weeds cover

Wait for thine ethereal lover ;

For the pallid moon is waning,

O'er the spiral cypress hanging

And the moon no cloud is staining.

It was once a Roman's chamber,  
Where he kept his darkest revels,  
And the wild weeds twine and clam-  
ber ;

It was then a chasm for devils.

## XIII

THERE is a warm and gentle atmo-  
sphere [thus

About the form of one we love, and  
As in a tender mist our spirits are

Wrapt in the — of that which is to  
us

The health of life's own life.

## XIV

How sweet it is to sit and read the  
tales

Of mighty poets, and to hear the  
while

HH



Sweet music, which when the attention fails  
Fills the dim pause——

## XV

WHAT men gain fairly—that they should possess  
And children may inherit idleness,  
From him who earns it—This is understood;  
Private injustice may be general good.  
But he who gains by base and armed wrong,  
Or guilty fraud, or base compliances,  
May be despoiled; even as a stolen dress  
Is stript from a convicted thief, and he  
Left in the nakedness of infamy.

## XVI

WAKE the serpent not—lest he should not know the way to go,—  
Let him crawl which yet lies sleeping  
Through the deep grass of the meadow!  
Not a bee shall hear him creeping,  
Not a Mayfly shall awaken,  
From its cradling bluebell shaken,  
Not the starlight as he's sliding  
Through the glass with silent gliding.

## XVII

ROME has fallen, ye see it lying  
Heaped in undistinguished ruin:  
Nature is alone undying.

## XVIII

THE fitful alternations of the rain,  
When the chill wind, languid as with pain  
Of its own heavy moisture, here and there  
Drives through the grey and beamless atmosphere.

## XIX

I WOULD not be a king—enough  
Of woe it is to love!  
The path to power is steep and rough,  
And tempests reign above.

I would not climb the imperial throne;  
Tis built on ice which fortune's sun  
Thaws in the height of noon.

Then farewell, king, yet were I one,  
Care would not come so soon.  
Would he and I were far away  
Keeping flocks on Himelay!

## XX

O THOU immortal deity  
Whose throne is in the depth of human thought,  
I do adjure thy power and thee  
By all that man may be, by all that he is not,  
By all that he has been and yet must be!

## XXI

HE wanders, like a day-appearing dream,  
Through the dim wildernesses of the mind;  
Through desert woods and tracts, which seem  
Like ocean, homeless, boundless, unconfined.

## XXII

## ON KEATS

WHO DESIRED THAT ON HIS TOMB  
SHOULD BE INSCRIBED—

"Here lieth One whose name was writ on water!"  
But ere the breath that could erase it blew,  
Death, in remorse for that fell slaughter,  
Death, the immortalising winter flew,  
Athwart the stream, and time's monthless torrent grew  
A scroll of crystal, blazoning the name  
Of Adonais!—

## XXIII

THE rude wind is singing  
The dirge of the music dead,  
The cold worms are clinging  
Where kisses were lately fed.

## XXIV

WHAT art thou, Presumptuous, who profanest  
The wreath to mighty poets only due,

Even whilst like a forgotten moon  
thou wanest ?

Touch not those leaves which for  
the eternal few,

Who wander o'er the paradise of fame,  
In sacred dedication ever grew,—

One of the crowd thou art without a  
name.

Ah, friend, 'tis the false laurel that I  
wear ;

Bright though it seem, it is not the  
same

As that which bound Milton's immor-  
tal hair ;

Its dew is poison and the hopes  
that quicken

Under its chilling shade, though seem-  
ing fair,

Are flowers which die almost before  
they sicken.

## XXV

WHEN soft winds and sunny skies

With the green earth harmonize,

And the young and dewy dawn,

Bold as an unhunted fawn,

Up the wordless heaven is gone—

Laugh—for ambushed in the day,

Clouds and whirlwinds watch their  
prey.

## XXVI

THE babe is at peace within the womb

The corpse is at rest within the tomb,

We begin in what we end.

## XXVII

## EPITAPH

THESE are two friends whose lives  
were undivided ;

So let their memory be, now they  
have glided

Under their grave ; let not their bones  
be parted,

For their two hearts in life were single-  
hearted.

## XXVIII

## OTHO

THOU wert not, Cassius, and thou  
couldst not be,

Last of the Romans,"—though  
thy memory claim

From Brutus his own glory, and on  
thee

Rests the full splendour of his  
sacred fame :

Nor he who dared make the foul  
tyrant quail

Amid his cowering senate with thy  
name ;

Though thou and he were great, it will  
avail

To thine own fame that Otho's should  
not fail.

'Twill wrong thee not : thou wouldst,  
if thou couldst feel,

Abjure such envious fame. Great  
Otho died

Like thee : he sanctified his country's  
steel,

At once the tyrant and tyrannicide,  
In his own blood. A deed it was to  
wring

Tears from all men—though full of  
gentle pride,

Such pride as from impetuous love  
may spring

That will not be refused its offering.

Dark is the realm of grief : but hu-  
man things

Those may not know who cannot  
weep for them.

1817.

## XXXIX

O MIGHTY mind, in whose deep stream  
this age

Shakes like a reed in the unheeding  
storm,

Why dost thou curb not thine own  
sacred rage ?

1818.

## XXX

SILENCE ! Oh well are Death and  
Sleep and Thou

Three brethren named, the guardians  
gloomy-winged

Of one abyss, where life and truth and  
joy

Are swallowed up. Yet spare me,  
Spirit, pity me !

Until the sounds I hear become my  
soul,

And it has left these faint and weary  
limbs,

To track along the lapses of the air  
This wandering melody until it rests  
Among lone mountains in some. . .

1818.

XXXI

THE fierce beasts of the woods and  
wildernesses

Track not the steps of him who drinks  
of it ;

For the light breezes, which for ever  
fleet

Around its margin, heap the sand  
thereon.

1818.

XXXII

My head is wild with weeping for a  
grief

Which is the shadow of a gentle  
mind.

I walk into the air, (but no relief  
To seek,—or haply, if I sought, to  
find ;

It came unsought) ;—to wonder that  
a chief

Among men's spirits should be cold  
and blind.

1818.

XXXIII

Flourishing vine, whose kindling clus-  
ters glow

Beneath the autumnal sun, none  
taste of thee ;

For thou dost shroud a ruin, and be-  
low

The rotting bones of dead antiquity.

1818.

XXXIV

#### SCENE FROM TASSO

MADDALO . . . . . a *Courtier*

MALPIGLIO . . . . . a *Poet*

PIGNA . . . . . a *Minister*

ALBANO . . . . . an *Usher*

*Mad.* No access to the Duke ! You  
have not said  
That the Count Maddalo would speak  
with him ?

*Pigna.* Did you inform his Grace  
that Signor Pigna

Waits with state papers for his signa-  
ture ?

*Mal.* The Lady Leonora cannot  
know

That I have written a sonnet to her  
fame.

In which I . . . Venus and Adonis.

You should not take n.y gold, and  
serve me not.

*Alb.* In truth I told her ; and she  
smiled and said,

" If I am Venus, thou, coy Poesy,  
Art the Adonis whom I love, and he  
The Erymanthian boar that wounded  
him."

Oh trust to me, Signor Malpiglio,  
Those nods and smiles were favours  
worth the zechin.

*Mal.* The words are twisted in some  
double sense

That I reach not : the smiles fell not  
on me.

*Pigna.* How are the Duke and  
Duchess occupied ?

*Alb.* Buried in some strange talk.  
The Duke was leaning—

His finger on his brow, his lips un-  
closed,

The Princess sate within the window-  
seat,

And so her face was hid ; but on her  
knee

Her hands were clasped, veined, and  
pale as snow,

And quivering. Young Tasso, too,  
was there.

*Mad.* Thou seest on whom from  
thine own worshipped heaven

Thou draw'st down smiles—they did  
not rain on thee.

*Mal.* Would they were parching  
lightnings, for his sake

On whom they fell !

#### SONG FOR TASSO

I LOVED—alas ! our life is love ;  
But, when we cease to breathe and  
move,

I do suppose love ceases too.

I thought (but not as now I do)

Keen thoughts and bright of linked  
lore,—

Of all that men had thought before,  
And all that Nature shows, and more.

And still I love, and still I think,  
But strangely, for my heart can drink

The dregs of such despair, and live,  
And love.  
And, if I think, my thoughts come fast;  
I mix the present with the past,  
And each seems uglier than the last.

Sometimes I see before me flee  
A silver spirit's form, like thee,  
O Leonora! and I sit  
. . . still watching it,  
Till by the grated casement's ledge  
It fades, with such a sigh as sedge  
Breathes o'er the breezy streamlet's  
edge.

1818.

XXXV

SUCH hope as is the sick despair of  
good,  
Such fear as is the certainty of ill,  
Such doubt as is pale Expectation's  
food,  
Turned while she tastes to poison,  
when the will

Is powerless, and the spirit . . .

1820.

XXXVI

MY head is heavy, my limbs are  
weary,  
And it is not life that makes me  
move.

1820.

XXXVII

PROLOGUE TO HELLAS

HERALD OF ETERNITY

It is the day when all the Sons of God  
Wait in the roofless senate-house  
whose floor  
Is chaos and the immovable abyss  
Frozen by his steadfast word to hya-  
line.

The shadow of God, and delegate  
Of that before whose breath the uni-  
verse

Is as a print of dew.

Hierarchs and kings,  
Who from your thrones pinnacled on  
the past

Sway the reluctant present, ye who  
sit

Pavilioned on the radiance or the  
gloom

Of mortal thought, which, like an ex-  
halation

Steaming from earth, conceals the  
. . . of heaven [here

Which gave it birth, . . . assemble  
Before your Father's throne. The  
swift decree

Yet hovers, and the fiery incarnation  
Is yet withheld, clothed in which it  
shall

. . . annul  
The fairest of those wandering isles  
that gem

The sapphire space of interstellar air—  
That green and azure sphere, that  
earth-enwrapped

Less in the beauty of its tender light  
Than in an atmosphere of living spirit  
Which interpenetrating all the. . .  
. . . it rolls from realm to realm

And age to age, and in its ebb and flow  
Impels the generations

To their appointed place, •

Whilst the high Arbiter  
Beholds the strife, and at the appointed  
time

Sends his decrees veiled in eternal. . .  
Within the circuit of this pendent orb  
There lies an antique region, on which  
fell

The dews of thought, in the world's  
golden dawn

Earliest and most benign; and from  
it sprung

Temples and cities and immortal  
forms,

And harmonies of wisdom and of song,  
And thoughts, and deeds worthy of  
thoughts so fair.

And, when the sun of its dominion  
failed,

And when the winter of its glory came,  
The winds that stripped it bare blew  
on, and swept

That dew into the utmost wildernesses  
In wandering clouds of sunny rain  
that thawed

The unmaternal bosom of the North.  
Haste, Sons of God, . . . for ye be-  
held,

Reluctant or consenting or aston-  
ished,

The stern decrees go forth which  
heaped on Greece

Ruin and degradation and despair.  
 A fourth now waits. Assemble, Sons  
 of God,  
 To speed or to prevent or to suspend  
 (If, as ye dream, such power be not  
 withheld)  
 The unaccomplished destiny.

## CHORUS.

The curtain of the universe  
 Is rent and shattered,  
 The splendour-winged worlds disperse  
 Like wild doves scattered.

Space is roofless and bare,  
 And in the midst a cloudy shrine,  
 Dark amid thrones of light,  
 In the blue glow of hyaline  
 Golden worlds revolve and shine.  
 In . . . flight  
 From every point of the Infinite,  
 Like a thousand dawns on a single  
 night  
 The splendours rise and spread.  
 And though thunder and darkness  
 dread  
 Light and music are radiated,  
 And, in their pavilioned chariots led  
 By living wings, high overhead  
 The giant Powers move,  
 Gloomy or bright as the thrones they  
 fill.

A chaos of light and motion  
 Upon that glassy ocean.

The senate of the Gods is met,  
 Each in his rank and station set ;  
 There is silence in the spaces—

Lo ! Satan, Christ, and Mahomet,  
 Start from their places !

## CHRIST.

Almighty Father !  
 Low-kneeling at the feet of Destiny

There are two fountains in which  
 spirits weep  
 When mortals err, Discord and  
 Slavery named ;  
 And with their bitter dew two Des-  
 tinies  
 Filled each their irrevocable urns.  
 The third,

Fiercest and mightiest, mingled both,  
 and added  
 Chaos and death, and slow oblivion's  
 lymph,  
 And hate and terror, and the poisoned  
 rain

The Aurora of the nations. By this  
 brow  
 Whose pores wept tears of blood ; by  
 these wide wounds ;  
 By this imperial crown of agony ;  
 By infamy and solitude and death,  
 (For this I underwent) ; and by the  
 pain  
 Of pity for those who would . . . for  
 me  
 The unremembered joy of a revenge,  
 (For this I felt) ; by Plato's sacred  
 light,  
 Of which my spirit was a burning  
 morrow ;  
 By Greece, and all she cannot cease to  
 be,  
 Her quenchless words, sparks of  
 immortal truth,  
 Stars of all night—her harmonies  
 and forms,  
 Echoes and shadows of what Love  
 adores  
 In thee ; I do compel thee, send forth  
 Fate,  
 Thy irrevocable child ! Let her de-  
 scend,  
 A seraph-wingèd victory [arrayed]  
 In tempest of the omnipotence of God  
 Which sweeps through all things.  
 From hollow leagues, from Tyranny  
 which arms  
 Adverse miscreeds and emulous  
 anarchies  
 To stamp, as on a wingèd serpent's  
 seed,  
 Upon the name of Freedom ; from  
 the storm  
 Of faction, which like earthquake  
 shakes and sickens  
 The solid heart of enterprise ; from all  
 By which the holiest dreams of high-  
 est spirits  
 Are stars beneath the dawn . . .

. . . . She shall arise  
 Victorious as the world arose from  
 chaos !

And, as the heavens and the earth arrayed  
 Their presence in the beauty and the light  
 Of thy first smile, O Father ; as they gather •  
 The spirit of thy love, which paves for them  
 Their path o'er the abyss, till every sphere  
 Shall be one living spirit ; so shall Greece—

## SATAN.

Be as all things beneath the empyrean,  
 Mine ! Art thou eyeless like old Destiny,  
 Thou mockery-king, crowned with a wreath of thorns,  
 Whose sceptre is a reed, the broken reed  
 Which pierces thee, whose throne a chair of scorn ?  
 For seest thou not beneath this crystal floor  
 The innumerable worlds of golden light  
 Which are my empire, and the least of them  
 . . . which thou wouldst redeem from me ?  
 Knowst thou not them my portion ?  
 Or wouldst rekindle the . . . strife  
 Which our great Father then did arbitrate  
 When he assigned to his competing sons  
 Each his apportioned realm ?  
 Thou Destiny,  
 Thou who art mailed in the omnipotence  
 Of Him who sends thee forth, whate'er thy task,  
 Speed, spare not to accomplish ! and be mine  
 Thy trophies, whether Greece again become  
 The fountain in the desert whence the earth  
 Shall drink of freedom, which shall give it strength  
 To suffer, or a gulf of hollow death  
 To swallow all delight, all life, all hope.  
 Go, thou viceregent of my will, no less  
 Than of the Father's. But, lest thou shouldst faint,

The winged hounds famine and pestilence  
 Shall wait on thee ; the hundred-forked snake  
 Insatiate superstition still shall . . .  
 The earth behind thy steps ; and war shall hover  
 Above, and fraud shall gape below, and change  
 Shall flit before thee on her dragon wings,  
 Convulsing and consuming. And I add  
 Three phials of the tears which demons weep  
 When virtuous spirits through the gate of death  
 Pass triumphing over the thorns of life,—  
 Sceptres and crowns, mitres and swords and snares,  
 Trampling in scorn, like him and Socrates.  
 The first is anarchy ; when power and pleasure,  
 Glory and science and security,  
 On freedom hang like fruit on the green tree,  
 Then pour it forth, and men shall gather ashes.  
 The second, tyranny—

## CHRIST.

Obdurate spirit !  
 Thou seest but the past in the to-come.  
 Pride is thy error and thy punishment.  
 Boast not thine empire, dream not that thy worlds  
 Are more than furnace-sparks or rainbow-drops  
 Before the Power that wields and kindles them.  
 True greatness asks not space ; true excellence  
 Lives in the Spirit of all things that live,  
 Which lends it to the worlds thou callest thine.

## MAHOMET.

Haste thou, and fill the waning crescent  
 With beams as keen as those which pierced the shadow

Of Christian night rolled back upon  
the West  
When the orient moon of Islam rode  
in triumph  
From Tmolus to the Acroceraunian  
snow.

Wake, thou word  
Of God, and from the throne of Des-  
tiny  
Even to the utmost limit of thy way  
May triumph

Be thou a curse on them whose  
creed  
Divides and multiplies the most high  
God !

1821.

XXXVIII

## SONNET TO BYRON

[I AM afraid these verses will not  
please you, but]  
If I esteemed you less, Envy would  
kill  
Pleasure, and leave to Wonder and  
Despair  
The ministrations of the thoughts that  
fill  
The mind which, like a worm whose  
life may share  
A portion of the unapproachable,  
Marks your creations rise as fast  
and fair  
As perfect worlds at the Creator's will.  
But such is my regard that nor your  
power  
To soar above the heights where  
others [climb],  
Nor fame, that shadow of the unborn  
hour  
Cast from the envious future on the  
time,  
Move one regret for his unhonoured  
name  
Who dares these words :—the worm  
beneath the sod  
May lift itself in homage of the God.  
1821.

XXXIX

I FAINT ! I perish with my love ! I  
grow

Frail as a cloud whose [splend-  
ours] pale  
Under the evening's ever-changing  
glow :  
I die like mist upon the gale,  
And like a wave under the calm I fail.

XL

GREAT Spirit whom the sea of bound-  
less thought  
Nurtures within its unimagined caves,  
In which thou sittest solc, as in my  
mind,  
Giving a voice to its mysterious  
waves.

XLI

FAINT with love, the Lady of  
the South  
Lay in the paradise of Lebanon  
Under a heaven of cedar boughs ; the  
drought  
Of love was on her lips ; the light  
was gone  
Out of her eyes.

XLII

## CHARLES THE FIRST

SCENE I.—*The Masque of the Inns of  
Court.*

*A Pursuivant.* PLACE for the Mar-  
shal of the Masque !

*First Citizen.* What thinkest thou  
of this quaint masque, which  
turns,

Like morning from the shadow of the  
night,

The night to day, and London to a  
place

Of peace and joy ?

*Second Citizen.* And hell to heaven !  
Eight years are gone,  
And they seem hours, since in this  
populous street

I trod on grass made green by sum-  
mer's rain ;

For the red plague kept state within  
that palace

Where now that vanity reigns. In  
nine years more

The roots will be refreshed with civil  
blood ;

And thank the mercy of insulted  
Heaven

That sin and wrongs wound, as an  
orphan's cry,  
The patience of the great Avenger's  
ear.

*A Youth.* Yet, father, 'tis a happy  
sight to see,—

Beautiful, innocent, and unforbidden  
By God or man. 'Tis like the bright  
• procession

Of skyey visions in a solemn dream  
From which men wake as from a para-  
dise,

And draw new strength to tread the  
thorns of life.

If God be good, wherefore should this  
be evil?

And, if this be not evil, dost thou not  
draw

Unseasonable poison from the flowers  
Which bloom so rarely in this barren  
world?

Oh! kill these bitter thoughts which  
make the present

Dark as the future!—

When Avarice and Tyranny, vigilant  
Fear

And open-eyed Conspiracy, lie sleep-  
ing

As on hell's threshold; and all gentle  
thoughts

Waken to worship Him who giveth  
joys,

With his own gift.

*Second Citizen.* How young art  
thou in this old age of time!

How green in this grey world! Canst  
thou discern

The signs of seasons, yet perceive  
no hint

Of change in that stage-scene in which  
thou art

Not a spectator but an actor? or  
Art thou a puppet moved by [engin-  
ery]?

The day that dawns in fire will die in  
storms,

Even though the noon be calm. *My*  
travel's done,

Before the whirlwind wakes I shall  
have found

My inn of lasting rest; but thou  
must still

Be journeying on in this inclement  
air.

Wrap thy old cloak about thy back;  
Nor leave the broad and plain and  
beaten road,

Although no flowers smile on the trod-  
den dust,

For the violet paths of pleasure. This  
• Charles the First •

Rose like the equinoctial sun, . . .  
By vapours, through whose threaten-  
ing ominous veil

Darting his altered influence he has  
gained

This height of noon—from which he  
must decline

Amid the darkness of conflicting  
storms,

To dank extinction and to latest night  
• There goes

The apostate Strafford; he whose  
titles . . .

• whispered aphorisms  
From Machiavel and Bacon: and, if

Judas  
Had been as brazen and as bold as

he. . . .  
*First Citizen.* That

Is the Archbishop.

*Second Citizen.* Rather say the  
Pope:

London will be soon his Rome. He  
walks

As if he trod upon the heads of men:  
He looks clate, drunken with blood  
and gold.

Beside him moves the Babylonian  
woman

Invisibly, and with her as with his  
shadow,

Mitred adulterer! he is joined in sin,  
Which turns Heaven's milk of mercy  
to revenge.

*Third Citizen (lifting up his eyes).*  
Good Lord! rain it down upon  
him!

Amid her ladies walks the Papis-  
queen

As if her nice feet scorned our English  
earth.

The Canaanitish Jezebel! I would  
be

A dog if I might tear her with my  
teeth!

There's old Sir Henry Vane, the Earl  
of Pembroke.



Lord Essex, and Lord Keeper Coventry,

And others who made base their English breed

By vile participation of their honours  
With Papists, atheists, tyrants, and apostates.

When lawyers masque, 'tis time for honest men

To strip the vizard from their purposes.  
A seasonable time for masquers this!

When Englishmen and Protestants should sit

. . . dust on their dishonoured heads,  
To avert the wrath of Him whose scourge is felt

For the great sins which have drawn down from heaven

. . . . . and foreign overthrow.  
The remnant of the martyred saints

in Rochefort

Have been abandoned by their faithless allies

To that idolatrous and adulterous torturer

Lewis of France,—the Palatinate is lost. . . .

*Enter LEIGHTON (who has been branded in the face) and BASTWICK.*

Canst thou be—art thou . . . . ?  
*Leighton.* I was Leighton: what

I am thou seest. And yet turn thine eyes,

And with thy memory look on thy friend's mind,

Which is unchanged, and where is written deep

The sentence of my judge.

*Third Citizen.* Are these the marks with which

Laud thinks to improve the image of his Maker

Stamped on the face of man? Curses upon him,

The impious tyrant!

*Second Citizen.* It is said besides That lewd and Papist drunkards may

profane The Sabbath with their . . . .

And has permitted that most heathenish custom

Of dancing round a pole dressed up with wreaths

On May Day.

A man who thus twice crucifies his God

May well . . . his brother.—In my mind, friend,

The root of all this ill is prelacy.

I would cut up the root  
*Third Citizen.* And by what means?

*Second Citizen.* Smiting each Bishop under the fifth rib.

*Third Citizen.* You seem to know the vulnerable place

Of these same crocodiles.

*Second Citizen.* I learnt it in Egyptian bondages, sir. Your worm

of Nile Betrays not with its flattering tears like they;

For, when they cannot kill, they whine and weep.

Nor is it half so greedy of men's bodies As they of soul and all; nor does it wallow

In slime as they in simony and lies And close lusts of the flesh.

*A Marshalsman.* Give place, give place!

You torchbearers, advance to the great gate,

And then attend the Marshal of the Masque

Into the royal presence.

*A Law Student.* What thinkest thou

Of this quaint show of ours, my aged friend?

Even now we see the redness of the torches

Inflame the night to the eastward, and the clarions

Gasp (?) to us on the wind's wave. It comes!

And their sounds, floating hither round the pageant,

Rouse up the astonished air.

*First Citizen.* I will not think but that our country's wounds

May yet be healed. The king is just and gracious,

Though wicked counsels now pervert his will:

These once cast off—

*Second Citizen.* As adders cast their skins

And keep their venom, so kings often change;

Counsels and counsellors hang on one another,  
Hiding the loathsome . . . ,  
Like the base patchwork of a leper's rags.

*A Youth.* • Oh ! still those dissonant thoughts !—List how the music

Grows on the enchanted air ! And see, the torches  
Restlessly flashing, and the crowd divided  
Like waves before an admiral's prow !

*A Marshalsman.* Give place  
To the Marshal of the Masque !

*A Pursuivant.* Room for the King !

*A Youth.* How glorious ! See those thronging chariots

Rolling, like painted clouds before the wind,

Behind their solemn steeds : how some are shaped

Like curved sea-shells dyed by the azure depths

Of Indian seas ; some like the newborn moon ;

And some like cars in which the Romans climbed

(Canopied by Victory's eagle wings outspread)

The Capitolian ! See how gloriously  
The mettled horses in the torchlight stir

Their gallant riders, while *they* check their pride,

Like shapes of some diviner element  
Than English air, and beings nobler than

The envious and admiring multitude.

*Second Citizen.* Ay, there they are—

Nobles, and sons of nobles, patentees,  
Monopolists, and stewards of this poor farm

On whose lean sheep sit the prophetic crows.

Here is the pomp that strips the houseless orphan,

Here is the pride that breaks the desolate heart.

These are the lilies glorious as Solomon,

Who toil not neither do they spin—unless

It be the webs they catch poor regues withal.

Here is the surfeit which to them who earn

The niggard wages of the earth scarce leaves

The tithe that will support them till they crawl

Back to her cold hard bosom. Here is health

Followed by grim disease, glory by shame,

Waste by lame famine, wealth by squalid want,

And England's sin by England's punishment.

And, as the effect pursues the cause foregone,

Lo, giving substance to my words, behold

At once the sign and the thing signified—

A troop of cripples, beggars, and lean outcasts,

Horsed upon stumbling jades, carted with dung,

Dragged for a day from cellars and low cabins

And rotten hiding-holes, to point the moral

Of this presentment, and bring up the rear !

*A Youth.* 'Tis but

The anti-masque, and serves as discords do

In sweetest music. Who would love May flowers

If they succeeded not to winter's flaw ?

Or day unchanged by night, or joy itself

Without the touch of sorrow ?

*Second Citizen.* I and thou . . .

*A Marshalsman.* Place, give place !

SCENE II.—*A Chamber in Whitehall.*

*Enter the KING, QUEEN, LAUD, LORD STRAFFORD, LORD COTTINGTON, and other Lords ; ARCHY ; also ST. JOHN, with some Gentlemen of the Inns of Court.*

*The King.* Thanks, gentlemen. I heartily accept

This token of your service : your gay masque

Was performed gallantly. And it shows well :

When subjects twine such flowers of observance (?)

With the sharp thorns that deck the English crown.

A gentle heart enjoys what it confers, Even as it suffers that which it inflicts, Though Justice guides the stroke. Accept my hearty thanks.

*The Queen.* And, gentlemen, Call your poor Queen your debtor. Your quaint pageant

Rose on me like the figures of past years,

Treading their still path back to infancy,

More beautiful and mild as they draw nearer

The quiet cradle. I could have almost wept

To think I was in Paris, where these shows [yet

Are well devised—such as I was ere My young heart shared a portion of

the burthen,

The careful weight, of this great monarchy.

*There,* gentlemen, between the sovereign's pleasure

And that which it regards, no clamour lifts

Its proud interposition. In Paris ribald censurers dare not move

Their poisonous tongues against these sinless sports ;

And *his* smile

Warms those who bask in it, as ours would do

If . . . Take my heart's thanks : add them, gentlemen,

To those good words which, were he King of France,

My royal lord would turn to golden deeds.

*St. John.* Madam, the love of Englishmen can make

The lightest favour of their lawful king

Outweigh a despot's.—We humbly take our leaves,

Enriched by smiles which France can never buy.

*[Exeunt St. JOHN and the Gentlemen of the Inns of Court.]*

*The King.* My lord Archbishop, Mark you what spirit sits in St.

John's eyes ?

Methinks it is too saucy for this presence.

*Archy.* Yes, pray your Grace look : for, like an unsophisticated . . . sees everything upside down, you who are wise will discern the shadow of an idiot in lawn sleeves and a rochet setting springs to catch woodcocks in haymaking time. Poor Archy, whose owl eyes are tempered to the error of his age, and because he is a fool, and by special ordinance of God forbidden ever to see himself as he is, sees now in that deep eye a blindfold devil sitting on the ball, and weighing words out between king and subjects. One scale is full of promises, and the other full of protestations : and then another devil creeps behind the first out of the dark windings [of a] pregnant lawyer's brain, and takes the bandage from the other's eyes, and throws a sword into the left hand scale, for all the world like my Lord Essex's there.

*Strafford.* A rod in pickle for the Fool's back !

*Archy.* Ay, and some are now smiling whose tears will make the brine ; for the Fool sees . . .

*Strafford.* Insolent ! You shall have your coat turned and be whipped out of the palace for this.

*Archy.* When all the fools are whipped, and all the Protestant writers, while the knaves are whipping the fools ever since a thief was set to catch a thief. If all turncoats were whipped out of palaces, poor Archy would be disgraced in good company. Let the knaves whip the fools, and all the fools laugh at it. [Let the] wise and godly slit each other's noses and ears (having no need of any sense of discernment in their craft) ; and the knaves, to marshal them, join in a procession to Bedlam, to entreat the madmen to omit their sublime Platonic contemplations, and manage the state of England. Let all the honest men who lie pinched (?) up at the prisons or the pillories, in custody of the pursuivants of the High-Commission Court, marshal them.

*Enter Secretary LYTTLETON, with papers.*

*The King (looking over the papers).*

These stiff Scots  
His Grace of Canterbury must take  
order

To force under the Church's yoke.—

You, Wentworth,  
Shall be myself in Ireland, and shall  
add

Your wisdom, gentleness, and energy,  
To what in me were wanting.—My

Lord Weston,  
Look that those merchants draw not  
without loss

Their bullion from the Tower; and,  
on the payment

Of Ship Money, take fullest compensation

For violation of our royal forests,  
Whose limits, from neglect, have been  
o'ergrown

With cottages and cornfields. The  
uttermost

Farthing exact from those who claim  
exemption

From knighthood: that which once  
was a reward

Shall thus be made a punishment,  
that subjects

May know how majesty can wear at  
will

The rugged mood.—My Lord of  
Coventry,

Lay my command upon the Courts  
below

That bail be not accepted for the pri-  
soners

Under the warrant of the Star Cham-  
ber.

The people shall not find the stub-  
bornness

Of Parliament a cheap or easy method  
Of dealing with their rightful sove-  
reign:

And doubt not this, my Lord of  
Coventry,

We will find time and place for fit  
rebuke.—

My Lord of Canterbury.

*Archy.* The fool is here.

*Laud.* I crave permission of your  
Majesty

To order that this insolent fellow be  
Chastised: he mocks the sacred char-  
acter,

Scoffs at the state, and——

*The King.* What, my Archy?  
He mocks and mimics all he sees and  
hears,

Yet with a quaint and graceful license.  
Prithee

For this once do not as Prynne would,  
were he

Primate of England. With your  
Grace's leave,

He lives in his own world; and, like a  
parrot

Hung in his gilded prison from the  
window

Of a queen's bower over the public  
way,

Blasphemes with a bird's mind:—his  
words, like arrows

Which know no aim beyond the  
archer's wit

Strike sometimes what eludes philo-  
sophy.—

[*To Archy.*] Go, sirrah, and repent  
of your offence

Ten minutes in the rain: be it your  
penance

To bring news how the world goes  
there.—Poor Archy!

[*Exit Archy.*

He weaves about himself a world of  
mirth

Out of the wreck of ours.

*Laud.* I take with patience, as my  
Master did,

All scoffs permitted from above.

*The King.* My lord.  
Pray overlook these papers. Archy's  
words

Had wings, but these have talons.

*The Queen.* And the lion  
That wears them must be tamed.

My dearest lord,  
I see the newborn courage in thine eye

Armed to strike dead the Spirit of the  
Time,

Which spurs to rage the many-headed  
beast.

Do thou persist: for faint but in re-  
solve,

And it were better thou hadst still re-  
mained

The slave of thine own slaves, who  
tear like curs

The fugitive, and flee from the pur-  
suer,

And opportunity, that empty wolf,

Flies at his throat who falls. Subdue  
thy actions  
Even to the disposition of thy purpose,  
And be that tempered as the Ebro's  
steel;  
And banish weak-eyed Mercy to the  
weak,  
Whence she will greet thee with a gift  
of peace,  
And not betray thee with a traitor's  
kiss.  
As when she keeps the company of  
rebels,  
Who think that she is Fear. This do,  
lest we  
Should fall as from a glorious pinnacle  
In a bright dream, and wake, as from  
a dream,  
Out of our worshipped state.  
*The King.* Belovèd friend,  
God is my witness that this weight of  
power,  
Which He sets me my earthly task to  
wield  
Under His law, is my delight and pride  
Only because thou lovest that and me.  
For a king bears the office of a God  
To all the under world; and to his  
God  
Alone he must deliver up his trust,  
Unshorn of its permitted attributes.  
[It seems] now as the baser elements  
Had mutinied against the golden sun  
That kindles them to harmony, and  
quells  
Their self-destroying rapine. The  
wild million  
Strike at the eye that guides them;  
like as humours  
Of the distempered body that conspire  
Against the spirit of life throned in  
the heart,—  
And thus become the prey of one an-  
other,  
And last of death. . . .  
*Strafford.* That which would be  
ambition in a subject  
Is duty in a sovereign; for on him,  
As on a keystone, hangs the arch of  
life,  
Whose safety is its strength. Degree  
and form,  
And all that makes the age of reason-  
ing man  
More memorable than a beast's, de-  
pend

On this—that Right should fence it-  
self inviolably  
With power; in which respect the  
state of England  
From usurpation by the insolent Com-  
mons  
Cries for reform.  
Get treason, and spare treasure. Fee  
with coin  
The loudest murmurers; feed with  
jealousies  
Opposing factions,—be thyself of  
none;  
And borrow gold of many, for those  
who lend  
Will serve thee till thou payest them;  
and thus  
Keep the fierce spirit of the hour at  
bay,  
Till time, amid its coming generations  
Of nights and days unborn, bring  
some one chance,  
Or war or pestilence or Nature's self,  
By some distemperature or terrible  
sign,  
Be as an arbiter betwixt themselves.  
. . . Nor let your Majesty  
Doubt here the peril of the unseen  
event.  
How did your brother kings, coheri-  
tors  
In your high interest in the subject  
earth,  
Rise past such troubles to that height  
of power  
Where now they sit, and awfully se-  
rene  
Smile on the trembling world? Such  
popular storms  
Philip the Second of Spain, this Lewis  
of France,  
And late the German head of many  
bodies,  
And every petty lord of Italy,  
Quelled or by arts or arms. Is Eng-  
land poorer  
Or feebler? or art thou who wield'st  
her power  
Tamer than they? or shall this island  
be—  
[Girdled] by its inviolable waters—  
To the world present and the world to  
come  
Sole pattern of extinguished mon-  
archy?

Not if thou dost as I would have thee do.

*The King.* Your words shall be my deeds :

You speak the image of my thought.

My friend

(If kings can have a friend, I call thee so),

Beyond the large commission which belongs (?)

Under the great seal of the realm, take this :

And, for some obvious reasons, let there be

No seal on it, except my kingly word And honour as I am a gentleman.

Be—as thou art within my heart and mind—

Another self, here and in Ireland :

Do what thou judgest well, take amplest license,

And stick not even at questionable means.

Hear me, Wentworth. My word is as a wall

Between thee and this world thine enemy—

That hates thee, for thou lovest me.

*Strafford.*

I own

No friend but thee, no enemies but thine :

Thy lightest thought is my eternal law. How weak, how short, is life to

pay. . .

*The King.*

Peace, peace !

Thou ow'st me nothing yet.—[*To Laud*]. My lord, what say

Those papers ?

*Laud.* Your Majesty has ever interposed,

In lenity towards your native soil, Between the heavy vengeance of the

Church

And Scotland. Mark the consequence of warming

This brood of northern vipers in your bosom.

The rabble, instructed no doubt By Loudon, Lindsay, Hume, and false

Argyll,

(For the waves never menace heaven until

Scourged by the wind's invisible tyranny)

Have in the very temple of the Lord Done outrage to His chosen ministers.

They scorn the liturgy of the holy Church,

Refuse to obey her canons, and deny The apostolic power with which the

Spirit

Has filled its elect vessels, even from him

Who held the keys with power to loose and bind,

To him who now pleads in this royal presence.

Let ampler powers and new instructions be

Sent to the High Commissioners in Scotland.

To death, imprisonment, and confiscation,

Add torture, add the ruin of the kindred

Of the offender, add the brand of infamy,

Add mutilation : and, if this suffice not,

Unleash the sword and fire, that, in their thirst,

They may lick up that scum of schismatics.

I laugh at those weak rebels who, desiring

What we possess, still prate of Christian peace :

As if those dreadful arbitrating messengers

Which play the part of God 'twixt right and wrong

Should be let loose against the innocent sleep

Of templed cities and the smiling fields For some poor argument of policy

Which touches our own profit or our pride

(Where it indeed were Christian charity

To turn the cheek even to the smiter's hand) ;

And, when our great Redeemer, when our God,

When He who gave, accepted, and retained,

Himself in propitiation of our sins, Is scorned in His immediate ministry,

With hazard of the inestimable loss Of all the truth and discipline which is

Salvation to the extremest generation Of men innumerable, they talk of

peace !

Such peace as Canaan found, let Scotland now :

For, by that Christ who came to bring a sword,

Not peace, upon the earth, and gave command

To his disciples at the passover

That each should sell his robe and buy a sword,—

Once strip that minister of naked wrath,

And it shall never sleep in peace again Till Scotland bend or break.

*The King.* My Lord Archbishop, Do what thou wilt and what thou canst in this.

Thy earthly even as thy heavenly King

Gives thee large power in his unquiet realm.

But we want money, and my mind misgives me

That for so great an enterprise, as yet, We are unfurnished.

*Strafford.* Yet it may not long, Rest on our wills.

*Cottington.* The expenses Of gathering Ship Money, and of dis- training

For every petty rate (for we encounter A desperate opposition inch by inch In every warehouse and on every farm),

Have swallowed up the gross sum of the imposts ;

So that, though felt as a most grievous scourge

Upon the land, they stand us in small stead

As touches the receipt.

*Strafford.* 'Tis a conclusion Most arithmetical : and thence you infer

Perhaps the assembling of a Parli- ment.

Now, if a man should call his dearest enemies

To sit in licensed judgment on his life, His Majesty might wisely take that course.

[*Aside to Cottington.*] It is enough to expect from these lean imposts

That they perform the office of a scourge,

Without more profit. [*Aloud.*] Fines and confiscations,

And a forced loan from the refractory City,

Will fill our coffers : and the golden love

Of loyal gentlemen and noble friends For the worshipped father of our com- mon country,

With contributions from the catholics, Will make Rebellion pale in our ex- cess.

Be these the expedients until time and wisdom

Shall frame a settled state of govern- ment.

*Laud.* And weak expedients they ! Have we not drained

All, till the . . . which seemed A mine exhaustless ?

*Strafford.* And the love which is, If loyal hearts could turn their blood to gold.

*Laud.* Both now grow barren : and I speak it not

As loving Parliaments, which, as they have been,

In the right hand of bold bad mighty kings,

The scourges of the bleeding Church, I hate.

Methinks they scarcely can deserve our fear.

*Strafford.* O my dear liege, take back the wealth thou gavest :

With that, take all I held, but as in trust

For thee, of mine inheritance : leave me but

This unprovided body for thy service, And a mind dedicated to no care

Except thy safety :—but assemble not

[like me, A Parliament. Hundreds will bring, Their fortunes, as they would their blood, before . . .

*The King.* No ! thou who judgest them art but one. Alas !

We should be too much out of love with heaven,

Did this vile world show many such as thee,

Thou perfect just and honourable man !

Never shall it be said that Charles of England

Stripped those he loved for fear of those he scorns ;

Nor will he so much misbecome his throne

As to impoverish those who most adorn

And best defend it. That you urge, dear Strafford,

Inclines me rather . . .

*The Queen.* To a Parliament?

Is this thy firmness? and thou wilt preside

Over a knot of . . . censurers,

To the unswearing of thy best resolves,

And choose the worst, when the worst comes too soon

Plight not the worst before the worst must come.

Oh! wilt thou smile whilst our ribald foes,

Dressed in their own usurped authority,

Sharpen their tongues on Henrietta's fame?

It is enough! Thou lovest me no more! [*Wceps.*]

*The King.* O Henrietta!

[*They talk apart.*]

*Cottington* [*to Laud*]. Money we have none:

And all the expedients of my Lord of Strafford

Will scarcely meet the arrears.

*Laud.* Without delay

An army must be sent into the north; Followed by a Commission of the

Church,

With amplest power to quench in fire and blood,

And tears and terror, and the pity of hell,

The intenser wrath of Heresy. God will give

Victory; and victory over Scotland give

The lion England tamed into our hands.

That will lend power, and power bring gold.

*Cottington.* Meanwhile

We must begin first where your Grace leaves off.

Gold must give power, or . . .

*Laud* I am not averse

From the assembling of a Parliament

Strong actions and smooth words

might teach them soon

S. P.

The lesson to obey. And are they not A bubble fashioned by the monarch's mouth,

The birth of one light breath? If they serve no purpose,

A word dissolves them.

*Strafford.* The engine of Parliaments

Might be deferred until I can bring over

The Irish regiments: they will serve to assure

The issue of the war against the Scots. And, this game won—which if lost, all is lost—

Gather those chosen leaders of the rebels,

And call them, if you will, a parliament.

*The King.* Oh be our feet still tardy shed blood,

Guilty though it may be! I would still spare

The stubborn country of my birth, and ward

From countenances which I loved in youth

The wrathful Church's lacerating hand.

[*To Laud.*] Have you o'erlooked the other articles?

[*Re-enter ARCHY.*]

*Laud.* Hazlerig, Hampden, Pym, young Harry Vane,

Cromwell, and other rebels of less note, Intend to sail with the next favouring

wind

For the Plantations.

*Archy.* Where they think to found

A commonwealth like Gonzalo's in the play,

Gynæcœonic and pantisocratic.

*The King.* What's that, sirrah?

*Archy.* New devil's politics.

Hell is the pattern of all commonwealths:

Lucifer was the first republican.

Will you hear Merlin's prophecy, how three posts (?)

"In one brainless skull, when the whitethorn is full,

Shall sail round the world, and come back again:

Shall sail round the world in a brainless skull,



And come back again when the moon  
is at full " :—

When, in spite of the Church,  
They will hear homilies of whatever  
length

Or form they please.

*Cottington*(?). So please your Majesty  
to sign this order

For their detention.

*Archy*. If your Majesty were tormented night and day by fever, gout, rheumatism, and stone, and asthma, &c., and you found these diseases had secretly entered into a conspiracy to abandon you, should you think it necessary to lay an embargo on the port by which they meant to dispeople your unquiet kingdom of man ?

*The King*. If fear were made for kings, the Fool mocks wisely ;  
But in this case . . . [*writing*] Here,  
my lord, take the warrant,  
And see it duly executed forthwith.—  
That imp of malice and mockery shall  
be punished.

[*Exeunt all but the King, the Queen,  
and Archy.*]

*Archy*. Ay, I am the physician of whom Plato prophesied, who was to be accused by the confessor before a jury of children, who found him, guilty without waiting for the summing-up, and hanged him without benefit of clergy. Thus Baby Charles, and the Twelfth Night Queen of Hearts and the overgrown schoolboy Cottington, and that little urchin Laud—who would reduce a verdict of " guilty, death," by famine, if it were impregnable by composition—all impannelled against poor Archy for presenting them bitter physic the last day of the holidays.

*The Queen*. Is the rain ver, sirrah ?

*The King*. When it rains

And the sun shines, 'twill rain again  
to-morrow :

And therefore never smile till you've  
done crying.

*Archy*. But 'tis all over now : like the April anger of woman, the gentle sky has wept itself serene.

*The Queen*. What news abroad ? how looks the world this morning ?

*Archy*. Gloriously as a grave covered with virgin flowers. There's a rain-

bow in the sky. Let your Majesty look at it, for

" A rainbow in the morning  
Is the shepherd's warning " ;

and the flocks of which you are the pastor are scattered among the mountain tops, where every drop of water is a flake of snow, and the breath of May pierces like a January blast.

*The King*. The sheep have mistaken the wolf for their shepherd, my poor boy ; and the shepherd, the wolves for the watchdogs.

*The Queen*. But the rainbow was a good sign, Archy : it says that the waters of the deluge are gone, and can return no more.

*Archy*. Ay, the salt-water one : but that of tears and blood must yet come down, and that of fire follow, if there be any truth in lies.—The rainbow hung over the city with all its shops, . . . and churches, from north to south, like a bridge of congregated lightning pieced by the masonry of heaven—like a balance in which the angel that distributes the coming hour was weighing that heavy one whose poise is now felt in the lightest hearts, before it bows the proudest heads under the meanest feet.

*The Queen*. Who taught you this trash, sirrah ?

*Archy*. A torn leaf out of an old book trampled in the dirt.—But for the rainbow. It moved as the sun moved, and . . . until the top of the Tower. . . of a cloud through its left hand tip, and Lambeth Palace look as dark as a rock before the other. Methought I saw a crown figured upon one tip, and a mitre on the other. So, as I had heard treasures were found where the rainbow quenches its points upon the earth, I set off, and at the Tower—But I shall not tell your Majesty what I found close to the closet-window on which the rainbow had glimmered.

*The King*. Speak ! I will make my Fool my conscience.

*Archy*. Then conscience is a fool.—I saw there a cat caught in a rat-trap. I heard the rats squeak behind the wainscots : it seemed to me that the very mice were consulting on the manner of her death.

*The Queen.* Archy is shrewd and bitter.

*Archy.* Like the season, so blow the winds.—But at the other end of the rainbow, where the grey rain was tempered along the grass and leaves by a tender interfusion of violet and gold in the meadows beyond Lambeth, what think you that I found instead of a mitre?

*The King.* Vane's wits perhaps.

*Archy.* Something as vain. I saw a gross vapour hovering in a stinking ditch over the carcass of a dead ass, some rotten rags, and broken dishes—the wrecks of what once administered to the stuffing-out and the ornament of a worm of worms. His Grace of Canterbury expects to enter the New Jerusalem some Palm Sunday in triumph on the ghost of this ass.

*The Queen.* Enough, enough! Go desire Lady Jane  
She place my lute, together with the music  
Mari received last week from Italy,  
In my boudoir, and . . .

[Exit Archy.]

*The King.* I'll go in.

*The Queen.* My beloved lord,  
Have you not noted that the Fool of late  
Has lost his careless mirth, and that  
his words  
Sound like the echoes of our saddest  
fears?

What can it mean? I should be loth  
to think

Some factious slave had tutored him.

*The King.* Oh no!  
He is but Occasion's pupil. Partly  
'tis

That our minds piece the vacant  
intervals

Of his wild words with their own  
fashioning,—

As in the imagery of summer clouds,  
Or coals of the winter fire, idlers find  
The perfect shadows of their teeming  
thoughts;

And, partly, that the terrors of the  
time

Are sown by wandering Rumour in all  
spirits, [best

And in the lightest and the least may

Be seen the current of the coming wind

*The Queen.* Your brain is over-  
wrought with these deep thoughts.  
Come, I will sing to you; let us go try  
These airs from Italy; and, as we pass  
The gallery, we'll decide where that  
Correggio

Shall hang—the Virgin Mother  
With her child, born the King of  
heaven and earth,

Whose reign is men's salvation. And  
you shall see

A cradled miniature of yourself asleep,  
Stamped on the heart by never-err-  
ing love;

Liker than any Vandyke ever made,  
A pattern to the unborn age of thee,  
Over whose sweet beauty I have wept  
for joy

A thousand times,—and now should  
weep for sorrow,

Did I not think that after we were  
dead

Our fortunes would spring high in him,  
and that

The cares we waste upon our heavy  
crown

Would make it light and glorious as a  
wreath

Of heaven's beams for his dear inno-  
cent brow.

*The King.* Dear Henrietta!

SCENE III.—*The Star Chamber.*

LAUD, JUXON, STRAFFORD, and  
others, as Judges. PRYNNE as a  
Prisoner, and then BASTWICK.

*Laud.* Bring forth the prisoner  
Bastwick: let the clerk

Recite his sentence.

*Clerk.* "That he pay five thou-  
sand

Pounds to the king, lose both his ears,  
be branded

With red-hot iron on the cheek and  
forehead,

And be imprisoned within Lancaster  
Castle

During the pleasure of the Court."

*Laud.* Prisoner,  
If you have aught to say wherefore

this sentence

Should not be put into effect, now  
speak.

**Juxon.** If you have aught to plead  
in mitigation,  
Speak.

**Bastwick.** Thus, my lords. If,  
like the prelates, I  
Were an invader of the royal power,  
A public scorner of the word of God,  
Profane, idolatrous, popish, super-  
stitious,  
Impious in heart and in tyrannic act,  
Void of wit, honesty, and temperance;  
If Satan were my lord, as theirs,—our  
God

Pattern of all I should avoid to do;  
Were I an enemy of my God and King  
And of good men, as ye are,—I should  
merit

Your fearful state and guilt prosperity,  
Which, when ye wake from the last  
sleep, shall turn  
To crows and robes of everlasting fire.  
But, as I am, I bid ye grudge me not  
The only earthly favour ye can yield,  
Or I think worth acceptance at your  
hands—

Scorn, mutilation, and imprisonment.  
. . . . . Even as my Master  
did,

Until Heaven's kingdom shall descend  
on earth,  
Or earth be like a shadow in the light  
Of Heaven absorbed. Some few  
tumultuous years

Will pass, and leave no wreck of what  
opposes

His will whose will is power.

**Laud.** Officer, take the prisoner  
from the bar,  
And be his tongue slit for his insolence.

**Bastwick.** While this hand holds a  
pen . . .

**Laud.** Be his hands . . .

**Juxon.** Stop!  
Forbear, my lord! The tongue,  
which now can speak

No terror, would interpret, being  
dumb,

Heaven's thunder to our harm; . . .  
And hands, which now write only their  
own shame,

With bleeding stumps might sign our  
blood away.

**Laud.** Much more such "mercy"  
among men would be,

Did all the ministers of Heaven's re-  
venge

Flinch thus from earthly retribution.

I  
Could suffer what I would inflict.

[*Exit Bastwick guarded.*] Bring up  
The Lord Bishop of Lincoln.—[*To*  
*Strafford*] Know you not

That, in distraining for ten thousand  
pounds

Upon his books and furniture at Lin-  
coln,

Were found these scandalous and se-  
ditionary letters

Sent from one Osbaldistone, who is  
fled?

I speak it not as touching this poor  
person;

But of the office which should make  
it holy,

Were it as vile as it was ever spotless.  
Mark too, my lord, that this expres-  
sion strikes

His Majesty, if I misinterpret not.

*Enter* BISHOP WILLIAMS *guarded.*

**Strafford.** 'Twere politic and just  
that Williams taste

The bitter fruit of his connexion with  
The schismatics. But you, my Lord

Archbishop,  
Who owed your first promotion to his  
favour,

Who grew beneath his smile—

**Laud.** Would therefore beg  
The office of his judge from this High  
Court,—

That it shall seem, even as it is, that I  
In my assumption of this sacred robe,

Have put aside all worldly prefer-  
ence,

All sense of all distinction of all per-  
sons,

All thoughts but of the service of the  
Church.—

Bishop of Lincoln!

**Williams.** Peace, proud hierarch!  
I know my sentence, and I own it just.

Thou wilt repay me less than I deserve,  
In stretching to the utmost.

. . . . .

SCENE IV.—HAMPDEN, PYM, CROM-  
WELL, *his Daughter, and young*  
SIR HARRY VANE.

*Hampden.* England, farewell!

Thou, who hast been my cradle,

Shalt never be my dungeon or my grave !  
 I held what I inherited in thee  
 As pawn for that inheritance of freedom  
 Which thou hast sold for thy despoiler's smile ;  
 How can I call thee England, or my country ?—  
 Does the wind hold ?  
*•Vane.* The vanes sit steady  
 Upon the Abbey towers. The silver lightnings  
 Of the Evening Star, spite of the City's smoke,  
 Tell that the north wind reigns in the upper air.  
 Mark too that fleet of fleecy-winged cloud  
 Sailing athwart St. Margaret's.  
*Hampden.* Hail, fleet herald  
 Of tempest ! that rude pilot who shall guide  
 Hearts free as his to realms as pure as thee,  
 Beyond the shot of tyranny,  
 Beyond the webs of that swollen spider . . .  
 Beyond the curses, calumnies, and lies (?)  
 Of atheist priests ! . . . And thou  
 Fair star, whose beam lies on the wide Atlantic, [calm,  
 Athwart its zones of tempest and of Bright as the path to a beloved home,  
 Oh, light us to the isles of the evening land !  
 Like floating Edens cradled in the glimmer  
 Of sunset, through the distant mist of years.  
 Touched by departing hope, they gleam ! lone regions,  
 Where power's poor dupes and victims yet have never  
 Propitiated the savage fear of kings  
 With purest blood of noblest hearts ;  
 whose dew  
 Is yet unstained with tears of those who wake  
 To weep each day the wrongs on which it dawns ;  
 Whose sacred silent air owns yet no echo  
 Of formal blasphemies ; nor impious rites

Wrest man's free worship, from the God who loves,  
 To the poor worm who envies us his love !  
 Receive, thou young . . . of Paradise,  
 These exiles from the old and sinful world !  
 This glorious clime ; this firmament, whose lights  
 Dart mitigated influence through their veil  
 Of pale blue atmosphere, whose tears keep green  
 The pavement of this moist all-feeding earth ;  
 This vaporous horizon, whose dim round  
 Is bastioned by the circumfluous sea,  
 Repelling invasion from the sacred towers ;  
 Presses upon me like a dungeon's grate,  
 A low dark roof, a damp and narrow wall.  
 The boundless universe  
 Becomes a cell too narrow for the soul  
 That owns a master ; while the loatheliest ward  
 Of this wide prison, England, is a nest  
 Of cradling peace built on the mountain tops,—  
 To which the eagle spirits of the free,  
 Which range through heaven and earth, and scorn the storm  
 Of time, and gaze upon the light of truth,  
 Return to brood on thoughts that cannot die  
 And cannot be repelled.  
 Like eaglets floating in the heaven of time,  
 They soar above their quarry, and shall stoop  
 Through palaces and temples thunder-proof.

## SCENE V.

*Archy.* I'll go live under the ivy that overgrows the terrace, and court the tears shed on its old roots (?), as the [wind ?] plays the song of  
 " A widow bird sate mourning  
 Upon a wintry bough."

[Sings] Heigho! the lark and the owl!  
 One flies the morning, and  
 one lulls the night:—  
 Only the nightingale, poor  
 fond soul,  
 Sings like the fool through  
 darkness and light.

"A widow bird sate mourning for her  
 love  
 Upon a wintry bough;  
 The frozen wind crept on above,  
 The freezing stream below.  
 There was no leaf upon the forest bare,  
 No flower upon the ground,  
 And little motion in the air  
 Except the millwheel's  
 sound."

1822.

## XLIII

## LINES

We meet not as we parted;  
 We feel more than all may see;  
 My bosom is heavy-hearted,  
 And thine full of doubt for me.  
 One moment has bound the free.

That moment is gone for ever;  
 Like lightning that flashed and died,  
 Like a snowflake upon the river,  
 Like a sunbeam upon the tide,  
 Which the dark shadows hide.

That moment from time was singled  
 As the first of a life of pain;  
 The cup of its joy was mingled  
 —Delusion too sweet though vain!  
 Too sweet to be mine again.

Sweet lips, could my heart have hidden  
 That its life was crushed by you,  
 Ye would not have then forbidden  
 The death which a heart so true  
 Sought in your briny dew.

Methinks too little cost  
 For a moment so found, so lost!

1822.

## XLIV

Bright wanderer, fair coquette of  
 heaven  
 To whom alone it has been given  
 To change and be adored for ever,  
 Envy not this dim world, for never  
 But once within its shadow grew  
 One fair as —

## TRANSLATIONS

## HYMNS OF HOMER

## HYMN TO MERCURY.

## I

SING, Muse, the son of Maia and of  
 Jove,  
 The Herald-child, king of Arcadia  
 And all its pastoral hills, whom in  
 sweet love [May  
 Having been interwoven, modest  
 Bore Heaven's dread Supreme—an  
 antique grove  
 Shadowed the cavern where the  
 lovers lay  
 In the deep night, unseen by gods or  
 men,  
 And white-armed Juno slumbered  
 sweetly then.

## II

Now, when the joy of Jove had its  
 fulfilling,  
 And Heaven's tenth moon chroni-  
 cled her relief,  
 She gave to light a babe all babes ex-  
 celling,  
 A schemer subtle beyond all belief;  
 A shepherd of thin dreams, a cow-  
 stealing,  
 A night-watching, and door-way-  
 laying thief,  
 Who 'mongst the gods was soon  
 about to thieve,  
 And other glorious actions to achieve

## III

The babe was born at the first peep of day ;

He began playing on the lyre at noon,

And the same evening did he steal away

Apollo's herds ;—the fourth day of the moon

On which him bore the venerable May,  
From her immortal limbs he leaped

full soon,

Nor long could in the sacred cradle keep,

But out to seek Apollo's herds would creep.

## IV

Out of the lofty cavern wandering

He found a tortoise, and cried out  
—" A treasure ! "

(For Mercury first made the tortoise sing)

The beast before the portal at his leisure

The flowery herbage was depasturing,  
Moving his feet in a deliberate measure

Over the turf. Jove's profitable son  
Eyeing him laughed, and laughing  
thus begun .—

## V

" A useful godsend are you to me now,

King of the dance, companion of the feast,

Lovely in all your nature ! Welcome, you

Excellent plaything ! Where, sweet mountain beast,

Got you that speckled shell ? Thus much I know,

You must come home with me and be my guest ;

You will give joy to me, and I will do  
All that is in my power to honour you.

## VI

" Better to be at home than out of door ;  
So come with me, and though it has been said

That you alive defend from magic power,

I know you will sing sweetly when  
you're dead."

Thus having spoken, the quaint infant bore,

Lifting it from the grass on which it fed,

And grasping it in his delighted hold,  
His treasured prize into the cavern old.

## VII

Then scooping with a chisel of grey steel,

He bored the life and soul out of the beast—

Not swifter a swift thought of woe or weal

Darts through the tumult of a human breast

Which thronging cares annoy—not swifter wheel

The flashes of its torture and unrest

Out of the dizzy eyes—than Maia's son

All that he did devise hath featly done.

## VIII

And through the tortoise's hard strong skin

At proper distances small holes he made,

And fastened the cut stems of reeds within,

And with a piece of leather overlaid

The open space and fixed the cubits in,  
Fitting the bridge to both, and

stretched o'er all

Symphonious chords of sheep-gut  
rhythmical.

## IX

When he had wrought the lovely instrument,

He tried the chords, and made division meet

Preluding with the plectrum, and there went

Up from beneath his hand a tumult sweet

Of mighty sounds, and from his lips he sent

A strain of unpremeditated wit

Joyous and wild and wanton—such you may

Hear among revellers on a holiday.

## X

He sung how Jove and May of the  
bright sandal  
Dallied in love not quite legitimate ;  
And his own birth, still scoffing at  
the scandal,  
And naming his own name, did celebrate ;  
His mother's cave and servant maids  
he planned all  
In plastic verse, her household stuff  
and state,  
Perennial pot, trippet, and brazen  
pan—  
But singing he conceived another  
plan.

## XI

Seized with a sudden fancy for fresh  
meat,  
He in his sacred crib deposited  
The hollow lyre, and from the cavern  
sweet  
Rushed with great leaps up to the  
mountain's head,  
Revolving in his mind some subtle  
feat  
Of thievish craft, such as a swindler  
might  
Devise in the lone season of dun night.

## XII

Lo ! the great Sun under the ocean's  
bed has  
Driven steeds and chariot—the  
child meanwhile strode  
O'er the Picrian mountains clothed  
in shadows,  
Where the immortal oxen of the  
god  
Are pastured in the flowering unmown  
meadows,  
And safely stalled in a remote  
abode—  
The archer Argicide, elate and proud,  
Drove fifty from the herd, lowing  
aloud.

## XIII

He drove them wandering o'er the  
sandy way,  
But, being ever mindful of his craft,  
Backward and forward drove he them  
astray,  
So that the tracks, which seemed  
before, were aft :

His sandals then he threw to the  
ocean spray,  
And for each foot he wrought a  
kind of raft  
Of tamarisk, and tamarisk-like sprigs,  
And bound them in a lump with withy  
twigs.

## XIV

And on his feet he tied these sandals  
light,  
The trail of whose wide leaves  
might not betray  
His track ; and then, a self-sufficing  
wight,  
Like a man hastening on some dis-  
tant way,  
He from Picria's mountain bent his  
flight ;  
But an old man perceived the infant  
pass  
Down green Onchestus, heaped like  
beds with grass.

## XV

The old man stood dressing his sunny  
vine :  
"Halloo ! old fellow with the  
crooked shoulder !  
You grub those stumps ? Before  
they will bear wine  
Methinks even you must grow a  
little older :  
Attend, I pray, to this advice of mine,  
As you would 'scape what might  
appal a bolder—  
Seeing, see not—and hearing, hear  
not—and—  
If you have understanding—under-  
stand."—

## XVI

So saying, Hermes roused the oxen  
vast ;  
O'er shadowy mountain and re-  
sounding dell,  
And flower-paven plains, great Hermes  
passed ;  
Till the black night divine, which  
favouring fell  
Around his steps, grew grey, and  
morning fast  
Wakened the world to work, and  
from her cell,  
Sea-strewn, the Pallantean Moom  
sublime

Into her watch-tower just began to  
climb.

## XVII

Now to Alpheus he had driven all  
The broad foreheaded oxen of the  
Sun ;  
They came unwearied to the lofty  
stall  
And to the water troughs which  
ever run  
Through the fresh fields—and when  
with rushgrasses  
Lotus and all sweet herbage, every  
one  
Had pastured been, the great god  
made them move  
Towards the stall in a collected drove.

## XVIII

A mighty pile of wood the god then  
heaped,  
And having soon conceived the  
mystery  
Of fire, from two smooth laurel  
branches stripped  
The bark, and rubbed them in his  
palms,—on high  
Suddenly forth the burning vapour  
leaped,  
And the divine child saw delight-  
edly—  
Mercury first found out for human  
weal  
Tinder-box, matches, fire-irons, flint,  
and steel.

## XIX

And fine dry logs and roots innumer-  
ous  
He gathered in a delve upon the  
ground,—  
And kindled them—and instantane-  
ous  
The strength of the fierce flame  
was breathed around  
And whilst the might of glorious Vul-  
can thus  
Wrapt the great pile with glare  
and roaring sound,  
Hermes dragged forth two heifers,  
lowing loud,  
Close to the fire—such might was in  
the god.

## XX

And on the earth upon their backs  
he threw  
The panting beasts, and rolled them  
o'er and o'er,  
And bored their lives out. Without  
more ado  
He cut up fat and flesh, and down  
before  
The fire on spits of wood he placed  
the two,  
Toasting their flesh and ribs, and  
all the gore  
Pursd in the bowels ; and while this  
was done  
He stretched their hides over a craggy  
stone.

## XXI

We mortals let an ox grow old, and  
then  
Cut it up after long consideration,—  
But joyous-minded Hermes from the  
glen  
Drew the fat spoils to the more  
open station  
Of a flat smooth space, and portioned  
them ; and when  
He had by lot assigned to each a  
ration  
Of the twelve gods, his mind became  
aware  
Of all the joys which in religion are.

## XXII

For the sweet savour of the roasted  
meat  
Tempted him, though immortal.  
Natheless  
He checked his haughty will and did  
not eat,  
Though what it cost him words can  
scarce express,  
And every wish to put such morsels  
sweet  
Down his most sacred throat, he  
did repress ;  
But soon within the lofty portalled  
stall  
He placed the fat and flesh and bones  
and all.

## XXIII

And every trace of the fresh butchery  
And cooking, the god soon made  
disappear,



As if it all had vanished through the sky ;  
 He burned the hoofs and horns and head and hair,—  
 The insatiate fire devoured them hungrily ;  
 And when he saw that everything was clear,  
 He quenched the coals and trampled the black dust,  
 And in the stream his bloody sandals tossed.

## XXIV

All night he worked in the serene moonshine—  
 But when the light of day was spread abroad  
 He sought his natal mountain peaks divine.  
 On his long wandering, neither man nor god  
 Had met him, since he killed Apollo's kine,  
 Nor house-dog had barked at him on his road ;  
 Now he obliquely through the key-hole passed,  
 Like a thin mist, or an autumnal blast.

## XXV

Right through the temple of the spacious cave  
 He went with soft light feet—as if his tread  
 Fell not on earth ; no sound their falling gave ;  
 Then to his cradle he crept quick, and spread  
 The swaddling clothes about him ; and the knave  
 Lay playing with the covering of the bed,  
 With his left hand about his knees—the right  
 Held his beloved tortoise-lyre tight.

## XXVI

There he lay innocent as a newborn child,  
 As gossips say ; but, though he was a god,  
 The goddess, his fair mother, unbelieved

Knew all that he had done, being abroad ;  
 " Whence come you, and from what adventure wild,  
 You cunning rogue, and where have you abode "  
 All the long night, clothed in your impudence ?  
 What have you done since you departed hence ?

## XXVII

" Apollo soon will pass within this gate,  
 And bind your tender body in a chain  
 Inextricably tight, and fast as fate,  
 Unless you can delude the god again,  
 Even when within his arms—ah, runagate !  
 A pretty torment both for gods and men  
 Your father made when he made you ! "—" Dear mother,"  
 Replied sly Hermes, " wherefore scold and bother ?

## XXVIII

" As if I were like other babes as old,  
 And understood nothing of what is what ;  
 And cared at all to hear my mother scold.  
 I in my subtle brain a scheme have got,  
 Which, whilst the sacred stars round Heaven are rolled,  
 Will profit you and me—nor shall our lot  
 Be as you counsel, without gifts or food,  
 To spend our lives in this obscure abode.

## XXIX

" But we will leave this shadow-peopled cave,  
 And live among the gods, and pass each day  
 In high communion, sharing what they have  
 Of profuse wealth and unexhausted prey ;  
 And, from the portion which my father gave

To Phœbus, I will snatch my share  
away,  
Which if my father will not—nathe-  
less I,  
Who am the king of robbers, can but  
try.

## XXX

"And, if Latona's son should find me  
out,  
I'll countermine him by a deeper  
plan;  
I'll pierce the Pythian temple-walls,  
though stout,  
And sack the fane of everything I  
can—  
Cauldrons and tripods of great worth  
no doubt,  
Each golden cup and polished  
brazen pan,  
All the wrought tapestries and gar-  
ments gay."—  
So they together talked;—mean-  
while the Day

## XXXI

Ethereal born, arose out of the flood  
Of flowing Ocean, bearing light to  
men.  
Apollo passed toward the sacred wood,  
Which from the inmost depths of  
its green glen  
Echoes the voice of Neptune,—and  
there stood  
On the same spot in green Onches-  
tus then  
That same old animal, the vine-  
dresser,  
Who was employed hedging his vine-  
yard there.

## XXXII

Latona's glorious Son began:—"I  
pray  
Tell, ancient hedger of Onchestus  
green,  
Whether a drove of kine has passed  
this way,  
All heifers with crooked horns? for  
they have been  
Stolen from the herd in high Pieria,  
Where a black bull was fed apart,  
between  
Two woody mountains in a neigh-  
bouring glen,  
And four fierce dogs watched there,  
unanimous as men.

## XXXIII

"And what is strange, the author of  
this theft  
Has stolen the fatted heifers every  
one,  
But the four dogs and the black bull  
are left:—  
Stolen they were last night at set of  
sun,  
Of their soft beds and their sweet food  
bereft—  
Now tell me, man born ere the  
world begun,  
Have you seen anyone pass with the  
cows?"  
To whom the man of overhanging  
brows,—

## XXXIV

"My friend, it would require no com-  
mon skill  
Justly to speak of everything I see;  
On various purposes of good or ill  
Many pass by my vineyard,—and  
to me  
'Tis difficult to know the invisible  
Thoughts, which in all those many  
minds may be:—  
Thus much alone I certainly can say,  
I tilled these vines till the decline of  
day,

## XXXV

"And then I thought I saw, but dare  
not speak  
With certainty of such a wondrous  
thing,  
A child, who could not have been  
born a week,  
Those fair-horned cattle closely  
following,  
And in his hand he held a polished  
stick:  
And, as on purpose, he walked  
waving  
From one side to the other of the  
road,  
And with his face opposed the steps  
he trod."

## XXXVI

Apollo, hearing this, passed quickly  
on—  
No winged omen could have shown  
more clear

That the deceiver was his father's son.

So the god wraps a purple atmosphere

Around his shoulders, and like fire is gone

To famous Pylos, seeking his kine there,

And found their track and his, yet hardly cold,

And cried—"What wonder do mine eyes behold!

## XXXVII

"Here are the footsteps of the horned herd

Turned back towards their fields of asphodel;

But these! are not the tracks of beast or bird,

Grey wolf, or bear, or lion of the dell,

Or maned Centaur—sand was never stirred

By man or woman thus! Inexplicable!

Who with unwearied feet could e'er impress

The sand with such enormous vestiges?

## XXXVIII

"That was most strange—but this is stranger still!"

Thus having said, Phœbus impetuously

Sought high Cyllene's forest-cinctured hill,

And the deep cavern where dark shadows lie,

And where the ambrosial nymph with happy will

Bore the Saturnian's love-child, Mercury—

And a delighted odour from the dew Of the hill pastures, at his coming, flew.

## XXXIX

And Phœbus stooped under the craggy roof

Arched over the dark cavern:—Maia's child

Perceived that he came angry, far aloof,

About the cows of which he had been beguiled,

And over him the fine and fragrant woof

Of his ambrosial swaddling-clothes he piled—

As among firebrands lies a burning spark

Covered, beneath the ashes cold and dark.

## XL

There, like an infant who had sucked his fill,

And now was newly washed and put to bed,

Awake, but courting sleep with weary will

And, gathered in a lump, hands, feet, and head,

He lay, and his beloved tortoise still

He grasped and held under his shoulder-blade;

Phœbus the lovely mountain goddess knew,

Not less her subtle, swindling baby, who

## XLI

Lay swathed in his sly wiles. Round every crook

Of the ample cavern, for his kine Apollo

Looked sharp; and when he saw them not, he took

The glittering key, and opened three great hollow

Recesses in the rock—where many a nook

Was filled with the sweet food immortals swallow,

And mighty heaps of silver and of gold

Were piled within—a wonder to behold!

## XLII

And white and silver robes, all overwrought

With cunning workmanship of tracery sweet—

Except among the gods there can be nought

In the wide world to be compared with it.

Latona's offspring, after having sought

His herds in every corner, thus did greet

Great Hermes :—" Little cradled  
rogue, declare,  
Of my illustrious heifers, where they  
are !

## • XLIII

" Speak quickly ! or a quarrel be-  
tween us  
Must rise, and the event will be,  
that I

Shall haul you into dismal Tartarus,  
In fiery gloom to dwell eternally !  
Nor shall your father nor your mother  
loose

The bars of that black dungeon—  
utterly

You shall be cast out from the light  
of day,  
To rule the ghosts of men, unblest as  
they."

## XLIV

To whom thus Hermes slyly answered:  
—" Son

Of great Latona, what a speech is  
this !

Why come you here to ask me what  
is done

With the wild oxen which it seems  
you miss ?

I have not seen them, nor from any-  
one

Have heard a word of the whole  
business ;

If you should promise an immense re-  
ward,

I could not tell more than you now  
have heard.

## • XLV

" An ox-stealer should be both tall  
and strong,

And I am but a little newborn  
thing, •

Who, yet at least, can think of no-  
thing wrong :—

My business is to suck, and sleep,  
and fling

The cradle-clothes about me all day  
long,—

Or, half asleep, hear my sweet  
mother sing,

And to be washed in water clean and  
warm,

And hushed and kissed and kept se-  
cure from harm,

## XLVI

" Oh, let not e'er this quarrel be  
averred !

The astounded gods would laugh  
at you, if e'er

You should allege a story so absurd,  
As that a newborn infant forth  
could fare

Out of his home after a savage herd.  
I was born yesterday—my small

feet are

Too tender for the roads so hard and  
rough :—

And if you think that this is not  
enough,

## • XLVII

" I swear a great oath, by my father's  
head,

That I stole not your cows, and  
that I know

Of no one else who might, or could,  
or did.—

Whatever things cows are I do not  
know,

For I have only heard the name."—

This said,

He winked as fast as could be, and  
his brow

Was wrinkled, and a whistle loud  
gave he,

Like one who hears some strange ab-  
surdity.

## XLVIII

Apollo gently smiled and said :—  
" Ay, ay,—

You cunning little rascal, you will  
bore

Many a rich man's house, and your  
array

Of thieves will lay their siege be-  
fore his door.

Silent as night, in night ; and many  
a day

In the wild glens rough shepherds  
will deplore

That you or yours, having an appe-  
tite,

Met with their cattle, comrade of the  
night !

## XLIX

" And this among the gods shall be  
your gift,

To be considered as the lord of  
those

Who swindle, housebreak, sheep-steal, and shoplift;—

But now if you would not your last sleep doze,

Crawl out!"—Thus saying, Phœbus did uplift

The subtle infant in his swaddling-clothes,

And in his arms, according to his wont,

A scheme devised the illustrious Argiphont.

\* \* \* \*

And sneezed and shuddered—Phœbus on the grass

Him threw, and whilst all that he had designed

He did perform—eager although to pass,

Apollo darted from his mighty mind

Towards the subtle babe the following scoff!

"Do not imagine this will get you off,

LI

"You little swaddled child of Jove and May!"

And seized him:—"By this omen I shall trace

My noble herds, and you shall lead the way."—

Cyllenian Hermes from the grassy place,

Like one in earnest haste to get away,

Rose, and with hands lifted towards his face,

Round both his ears up from his shoulders drew

His swaddling-clothes, and—"What mean you to do

LII

"With me, you unkind god?"—said Mercury:

"Is it about these cows you tease me so?

I wish the race of cows were perished!—I

Stole not your cows—I do not even know

What things cow are. Alas! I well may sigh,

That, since I came into this world of woe,

I should have ever heard the name of one—

But I appeal to the Saturnian's throne."

LIII

Thus Phœbus and the vagrant Mercury

Talked without coming to an explanation,

With adverse purpose. As for Phœbus, he

Sought not revenge, but only information,

And Hermes tried with lies and roguery

To cheat Apollo.—But when no evasion

Served—for the cunning one his match had found—

He paced on first over the sandy ground.

LIV

He of the Silver Bow, the child of Jove,

Followed behind, till to their heavenly sire

Came both his children—beautiful as Love,

And from his equal balance did require

A judgment in the cause wherein they strove.

O'er odorous Olympus and its snows

A murmuring tumult as they came arose,—

LV

And from the folded depths of the great Hill,

While Hermes and Apollo reverent stood

Before Jove's throne, the indestructible

Immortals rushed in mighty multitude;

And, whilst their seats in order due they fill,

The lofty Thunderer in a careless mood

To Phœbus said:—"Whence drive you this sweet prey,

This herald-baby, born but yesterday!"—

## LVI

"A most important subject, trifler,  
this  
To lay before the gods!"—"Nay,  
father, nay,  
When you have understood the business,  
Say not that I alone am fond of  
prey.  
I found this little boy in a recess  
Under Cyllene's mountains far  
away—  
A manifest and most apparent thief,  
A scandalmonger beyond all belief.

## LVII

"I never saw his like either in heaven  
Or upon earth for knavery or  
craft:—  
Out of the field my cattle yestereven,  
By the low shore on which the loud  
sea laughed,  
He right down to the river-ford had  
driven;  
And mere astonishment would  
make you datt  
To see the double kind of footsteps  
strange  
He has impressed wherever he did  
range.

## LVIII

"The cattle's track on the black dust  
full well  
Is evident, as if they went towards  
The place from which they came—  
that asphodel  
Meadow, in which I feed my many  
herds;  
His steps were most incomprehensible:—  
I know not how I can describe in  
words  
Those tracks—he could have gone  
along the sands  
Neither upon his feet nor on his  
hands;—

## LIX

"He must have had some other  
stranger mode  
Of moving on: those vestiges immense,  
Far as I traced them on the sandy  
road,  
Seemed like the trail of oak-top-  
pings:—but thence

No mark nor track denoting where  
they trod  
The hard ground gave!—but,  
working at his fence,  
A mortal hedger saw him as he past  
To Pylos, with the cows, in fiery haste.

## LX

"I found that in the dark he quietly  
Had sacrificed some cows, and before  
light  
Had thrown the ashes all dispersedly  
About the road—then, still as  
gloomy night,  
Had crept into his cradle, either eye  
Rubbing, and cogitating some new  
sleight.  
No eagle could have seen him as he  
lay  
Hid in his cavern from the peering  
day.

## LXI

"I taxed him with the fact, when he  
averred  
Most solemnly that he did neither  
see  
Nor even had in any manner heard  
Of my lost cows, whatever things  
cows be;  
Nor could he tell, though offered a  
reward,  
Not even who could tell of them  
to me."  
So speaking, Phœbus sate; and  
Hermes then  
Addressed the Supreme Lord of gods  
and men:

## LXII

"Great Father, you know clearly beforehand  
That all which I shall say to you is  
sooth;  
I am a most veracious person, and  
Totally unacquainted with un-  
truth.  
At sunrise Phœbus came, but with no  
band  
Of gods to bear him witness, in  
great wrath  
To my abode, seeking his heifers  
there,  
And saying that I must show him  
where they are,

## LXIII

" Or he would hurl me down the dark abyss.

I know that every Apollonian limb  
Is clothed with speed and might and manliness,

As a green bank with flowers—but unlike him

I was born yesterday, and you may guess

He well knew this when he indulged the whim

Of bullying a poor little newborn thing

That slept, and never thought of cow-driving.

## LXIV

" Am I like a strong fellow who steals kine ?

Believe me, dearest Father, such you are,

This driving of the herds is none of mine ;

Across my threshold did I wander ne'er,

So may I thrive ! I reverence the divine

Sun and the gods, and I love you, and care

Even for this hard accuser—who must know

I am as innocent as they or you.

## LXV

" I swear by these most gloriously-wrought portals—

(It is, you will allow, an oath of might)

Through which the multitude of the Immortals

Pass and repass for ever, day and night,

Devising schemes for the affairs of mortals—

That I am guiltless ; and I will requite,

Although mine enemy be great and strong,

His cruel threat—do thou defend the young ! "

## LXVI

So speaking, the Cyllenian Argiphont  
Winked, as if now his adversary  
was fitted :—

And Jupiter, according to his wont,  
Laughed heartily to hear the subtle-witted

Infant give such a plausible account,  
And every word a lie. But he remitted

Judgment at present—and his exhortation

Was, to compose the affair by arbitration.

## LXVII

And they by mighty Jupiter were bidden

To go forth with a single purpose both,

Neither the other chiding nor yet chidden :

And Mercury with innocence and truth

To lead the way, and show where he had hidden

The mighty heifers.—Hermes, nothing loth,

Obeved the Ægis-bearer's will—for he  
Is able to persuade all easily.

## LXVIII

These lovely children of Heaven's highest Lord

Hastened to Pylos and the pastures wide

And lofty stalls by the Alphean ford,  
Where wealth in the mute night is multiplied

With silent growth. Whilst Hermes drove the herd

Out of the stony cavern, Phœbus spied

The hides of those the little babe had slain,

Stretched on the precipice above the plain.

## LXIX

" How was it possible," then Phœbus said,

" That you, a little child, born yesterday,

A thing on mother's milk and kisses fed,

Could two prodigious heifers ever flay ?

E'en I myself may well hereafter dread

Your prowess, offspring of Cylle-  
nian May,  
When you grow strong and tall."—  
He spoke, and bound  
Stiff withy bands the infant's wrists  
around;

## LXX

He might as well have bound the oxen  
wild :  
The withy bands, though starkly  
interknit,  
Fell at the feet of the immortal child,  
Loosened by some device of his  
quick wit.  
Phœbus perceived himself again be-  
guiled,  
And stared—while Hermes sought  
some hole or pit,  
Looking askance and winking fast as  
thought,  
Where he might hide himself, and not  
be caught.

## LXXI

Sudden he changed his plan, and with  
strange skill  
Subdued the strong Latonian, by  
the might  
Of winning music, to his mightier will;  
His left hand held the lyre, and in  
his right  
The plectrum struck the chords—un-  
conquerable  
Up from beneath his hand in cir-  
cling flight  
The gathering music rose—and sweet  
as Love  
The penetrating notes did live and  
move

## LXXII

Within the heart of great Apollo—he  
Listened with all his soul, and  
laughed for pleasure.  
Close to his side stood harping fear-  
lessly  
The unabashed boy; and to the  
measure  
Of the sweet lyre, there followed loud  
and free  
His joyous voice; for he unlocked  
the treasure  
Of his deep song, illustrating the birth  
Of the bright gods and the dark des-  
ert Earth:

S. P.

## LXXIII

And how to the Immortals every one  
A portion was assigned of all that  
is;  
But chief Mnemosyne did Maia's son  
Clothe in the light of his loud meo-  
dies ;—  
And, as each god was born or had be-  
gun,  
He in their order due and fit de-  
grees  
Sung of his birth and being—and did  
move  
Apollo to unutterable love.

## LXXIV

These words were winged with his  
swift delight :  
" You heifer-stealing schemer, well  
do you  
Deserve that fifty oxen should re-  
quite  
Such minstrelsies as I have heard  
even now.  
Comrade of feasts, little contriving  
wight,  
One of your secrets I would gladly  
know,  
Whether the glorious power you now  
show forth  
Was folded up within you at your  
birth,

## LXXV

" Or whether mortal taught or god  
inspired  
The power of unpremeditated song?  
Many divinest sounds have I admired  
The Olympian gods and mortal men  
among ;  
But such a strain of wondrous, strange,  
untired,  
And soul-awakening music, sweet  
and strong,  
Yet did I never hear except from thee,  
Offspring of May, impostor Mercury !

## LXXVI

" What Muse, what skill, what un-  
imagined use,  
What exercise of subtlest art, has  
given  
Thy songs such power?—for those  
who hear may choose •  
From three, the choicest of the gifts  
of Heaven,

KK



Delight, and love, and sleep, sweet  
 sleep, whose dew  
 Are sweeter than the balmy tears of  
 even :—  
 And I, who speak this praise, am that  
 Apollo  
 Whom the Olympian Muses ever fol-  
 low :

## LXXVII

“ And their delight is dance, and the  
 blithe noise  
 Of song and overflowing poesy ;  
 And sweet, even as desire, the liquid  
 voice  
 Of pipes, that fills the clear air  
 thrillingly ;  
 But never did my inmost soul rejoice  
 In this dear work of youthful  
 revelry,  
 As now I wonder at thee, son of Jove ;  
 Thy harpings and thy song are soft as  
 love.

## LXXVIII

“ Now since thou hast, although so  
 very small,  
 Science of arts so glorious, thus I  
 swear,—  
 And let this cornel javelin, keen and  
 tall,  
 Witness between us what I prom-  
 ise here,—  
 That I will lead thee to the Olympian  
 Hall,  
 Honoured and mighty, with thy  
 mother dear,  
 And many glorious gifts in joy will  
 give thee,  
 And even at the end will ne'er de-  
 ceive thee.”

## LXXIX

To whom thus Mercury with prudent  
 speech :—  
 “ Wisely hast thou inquired of my  
 skill :  
 I envy thee no thing I know to teach  
 Even this day :—for both in word  
 and will  
 I would be gentle with thee ; thou  
 canst reach  
 All things in thy wise spirit, and  
 thy sill  
 Is highest in heaven among the sons  
 of Jove,

Who loves thee in the fulness of his  
 love.

## LXXX

“ The Counsellor Supreme has given  
 to thee  
 Divinest gifts, out of the ampli-  
 tude  
 Of his profuse exhaustless treasury ;  
 By thee, 'tis said, the depths are  
 understood  
 Of his far voice ; by thee the mystery  
 Of all oracular fates,—and the  
 dread mood  
 Of the diviner is breathed up, even I—  
 A child,—perceive thy might and  
 majesty—

## LXXXI

“ Thou canst seek out and compass  
 all that wit  
 Can find or teach ;—yet since thou  
 wilt, come, take  
 The lyre—be mine the glory giving  
 it—  
 Strike the sweet chords, and sing  
 aloud, and wake  
 Thy joyous pleasure out of many a fit  
 Of tranced sound—and with fleet  
 fingers make  
 Thy liquid-voiced comrade talk with  
 thee,—  
 It can talk measured music eloquently.

## LXXXII

“ Then bear it boldly to the revel  
 loud,  
 Love-wakening dance, or feast of  
 solemn state,  
 A joy by night or day—for those en-  
 dowed  
 With art and wisdom who inter-  
 rogate  
 It teaches, babbling in delightful  
 mood,  
 All things which make the spirit  
 most elate,  
 Soothing the mind with sweet familiar  
 play,  
 Chasing the heavy shadows of dis-  
 may.

## LXXXIII

“ To those who are unskilled in its  
 sweet tongue,  
 Though they should question most  
 impetuously

Its hidden soul, it gossips something  
wrong—

Some senseless and impertinent  
reply.

But thou who art as wise as thou art  
strong,

Canst compass all that thou desirest.  
I

Present thee with this music-flowing  
shell,

Knowing thou canst interrogate it  
well,

## LXXXIV

“ And let us two henceforth together  
feed

On this green mountain slope and  
pastoral plain,

The herds in litigation—they will  
breed

Quickly enough to recompense our  
pain,

If to the bulls and cows we take good  
heed ;—

And thou, though somewhat over  
fond of gain,

Grudge me not half the profit.”—  
Having spoke,

The shell he proffered, and Apollo  
took.

## LXXXV

And gave him in return the glittering  
lash,

Installing him as herdsman ;—from  
the look

Of Mercury then laughed a joyous  
flash ;

And then Apollo with the plectrum  
strook

The chords, and from beneath his  
hands a crash

Of mighty sounds rushed up, whose  
music shook

The soul with sweetness, and like an  
adept

His sweeter voice a just accordance  
kept.

## LXXXVI

The herd went wandering o'er the  
divine mead,

Whilst these most beautiful Sons of  
Jupiter

Won their swift way up to the snowy  
head

Of white Olympus, with the joyous  
lyre

Soothing their journey ; and their  
father dread

Gathered them both into familiar  
Affection sweet,—and then, and now,

and ever,

Hermes must love Him of the Golden  
Quiver,

## LXXXVII

To whom he gave the lyre that sweetly  
sounded,

Which skilfully he held and played  
thereon.

He piped the while, and far and wide  
rebounded

The echo of his pipings ; every one  
Of the Olympians sat with joy as-  
tounded,

While he conceived another piece of  
fun,

One of his old tricks—which the god  
of Day

Perceiving, said :—“ I fear thee, Son  
of May ;—

## LXXXVIII

“ I fear thee and thy sly chameleon  
spirit,

Lest thou shouldst steal my lyre  
and crooked bow ;

This glory and power thou dost from  
Jove inherit,

To teach all craft upon the earth  
below ;

Thieves love and worship thee—it is  
thy merit

To make all mortal business ebb and  
flow

By roguery :—now, Hermes, if you  
dare

By sacred Styx a mighty oath to  
swear,

## LXXXIX

“ That you will never rob me, you  
will do

A thing extremely pleasing to my  
heart.”

Then Mercury sware by the Stygian  
dew,

That he would never steal his bow  
or dart,

Or lay his hands on what to him was  
due.

Or ever would employ his powerful  
art  
Against his Pythian fane. Then  
Phœbus swore  
There was no god or man whom he  
loved more.

## XC

"And I will give thee as a good-will  
token  
The beautiful wand of wealth and  
happiness;  
A perfect three-leaved rod of gold un-  
broken,  
Whose magic will thy footsteps ever  
bless;  
And whatsoever by Jove's voice is  
spoken  
Of earthly or divine from its recess,  
It like a loving soul to thee will speak,  
And more than this do thou forbear  
to seek:

## XCI

For, dearest child, the divinations  
high  
Which thou requirest, 'tis unlawful  
ever  
That thou, or any other deity,  
Should understand—and vain were  
the endeavour;  
For they are hidden in Jove's mind,  
and I,  
In trust of them, have sworn that I  
would never  
Betray the counsels of Jove's inmost  
will  
To any god—the oath was terrible.

## XCII

"Then, golden-wanded brother, ask  
me not  
To speak the fates by Jupiter de-  
signed;  
But be it mine to tell their various lot  
To the unnumbered tribes of hu-  
man kind.  
Let good to these and ill to those be  
wrought  
As I dispense—but he who comes  
consigned  
By voice and wings of perfect augury  
To my great shrine, shall find avail  
in me.

## XCIII

"Him will I not deceive, but will as-  
sist;  
But he who comes relying on such  
birds  
As chatter vainly, who would strain  
and twist  
The purpose of the gods with idle  
words,  
And deems their knowledge light, he  
shall have missed  
His road—whilst I among my other  
hoards  
His gifts deposit. Yet, O son of May,  
I have another wondrous thing to say:

## XCIV

"There are three Fates, three virgin  
Sisters, who,  
Rejoicing in their wind-outspeed-  
ing wings,  
Their heads with flour snowed over  
white and new,  
Sit in a vale round which Parnas-  
sus flings  
Its circling skirts—from these I have  
learned true  
Vaticinations of remotest things.  
My father cared not. Whilst they  
search out dooms,  
They sit apart and feed on honey-  
combs.

## XCV

"They, having eaten the fresh honey,  
grow  
Drunk with divine enthusiasm,  
and utter  
With earnest willingness the truth  
they know;  
But, if deprived of that sweet food,  
they mutter  
All plausible delusions;—these to you  
I give;—if you inquire, they will  
not stutter;  
Delight your own scul with them:—  
any man  
You would instruct may profit if he  
can.

## XCVI

"Take these and the fierce oxen,  
Maia's child—  
O'er many a horse and toil-endur-  
ing mule,

O'er jagged-jawed lions, and the wild  
 White-tusked boars, o'er all, by  
 field or pool,  
 Of cattle which the mighty Mother  
 mild  
 Nourishes in her bosom, thou shalt  
 rule—  
 Thou dost alone the veil of death up-  
 lift—  
 Thou givest not—yet this is a great  
 gift."

## xcvii

Thus King Apollo loved the child of  
 May  
 In truth, and Jove covered them  
 with love and joy. •  
 Hermes with gods and men even  
 from that day  
 Mingled, and wrought the latter  
 much annoy,  
 And little profit, going far astray  
 Through the dun night. Farewell,  
 delightful Boy,  
 Of Jove and Maia sprung,—never by  
 me,  
 Nor thou, nor other songs, shall un-  
 remembered be.

## TO CASTOR AND POLLUX

YE wild-eyed Muses, sing the Twins  
 of Jove,  
 Whom the fair-ankled Leda mixed in  
 love  
 With mighty Saturn's heaven-ob-  
 scuring Child,  
 On Taygetus, that lofty mountain  
 wild,  
 Brought forth in joy, mild Pollux  
 void of blame,  
 And steel-subduing Castor, heirs of  
 fame.  
 These are the Powers who earth-born  
 mortals save  
 And ships, whose flight is swift along  
 the wave.  
 When wintry tempests o'er the sav-  
 age sea  
 Are raging, and the sailors tremblingly  
 Call on the Twins of Jove with prayer  
 and vow,  
 Gathered in fear upon the lofty prow,  
 And sacrifice with snow-white lambs,  
 the wind

And the huge billow bursting close  
 behind,  
 Even then beneath the weltering  
 waters bear  
 The staggering ship—they suddenly  
 appear,  
 On yellow wings rushing athwart the  
 sky,  
 And lull the blasts in mute tranquil-  
 lity,  
 And strew the waves on the white  
 ocean's bed,  
 Fair omen of the voyage ; from toil  
 and dread,  
 The sailors rest, rejoicing in the sight,  
 And plough the quiet sea in safe de-  
 light.

## TO MINERVA

I SING the glorious Power with azure  
 eyes,  
 Athenian Pallas ! tameless, chaste,  
 and wise,  
 Trilogenia, town-preserving maid,  
 Revered and mighty ; from this awful  
 head  
 Whom Jove brought forth, in warlike  
 armour dressed,  
 Golden, all radiant ! wonder strange  
 possessed  
 The everlasting gods that shape to  
 see,  
 Shaking a javelin keen, impetuously  
 Rush from the crest of Ægis-bearing  
 Jove ;  
 Fearfully Heaven was shaken, and  
 did move  
 Beneath the might of the Cerulean-  
 eyed ;  
 Earth dreadfully resounded, far and  
 wide,  
 And lifted from its depths, the sea  
 swelled high  
 In purple billows, the tide suddenly  
 Stood still, and great Hyperion's sun  
 long time •  
 Checked his swift steeds, till where  
 she stood sublime,  
 Pallas from her immortal shoulders  
 threw  
 The arms divine ; wise Jove rejoiced  
 to view.  
 Child of the Ægis-bearer, hail to thee,  
 Nor thine nor others' praise shall un-  
 remembered be.

## TO THE SUN

OFFSPRING of Jove, Calliope, once  
more

To the bright Sun, thy hymn of  
music pour ;

Whom to the child of star-clad Hea-  
ven and Earth

Euryphaessa, large-eyed nymph,  
brought forth ;

Euryphaessa, the famed sister fair  
Of great Hyperion, who to him did  
bear

A race of loveliest children ; the young  
Morn,

Whose arms are like twin roses  
newly born,

The fair-haired Moon, and the im-  
mortal Sun,

Who, borne by heavenly steeds his  
race doth run

Unconquerably, illuming the abodes  
Of mortal men and the eternal gods.

Fiercely look forth his awe-inspir-  
ing eyes,

Beneath his golden helmet, whence  
arise

And are shot forth afar clear beams  
of light ;

His countenance with radiant glory  
bright,

Beneath his graceful locks far shines  
around,

And the light vest with which his  
limbs are bound,

Of woof ethereal, delicately twined  
Glow in the stream of the uplifting  
wind.

His rapid steeds soon bear him to the  
west ;

Where their steep flight his hands  
divine arrest,

And the fleet car with yoke of gold,  
which he

Sends from bright heaven beneath  
the shadowy sea.

## TO THE MOON

DAUGHTERS of Jove, whose voice is  
melody,

Muses, who know and rule all min-  
strelsy !

Sing the wide-winged Moon. Around  
the earth,

From her 'immortal' head in Heaven  
shot forth,

Far light is scattered—boundless  
glory springs,

Where'er she spreads her many-beam-  
ing wings

The lampless air glows round her  
golden crown.

But when the Moon divine from  
Heaven is gone

Under the sea, her beams within  
abide,

Till, bathing her bright limbs in  
Ocean's tide,

Clothing her form in garments glitter-  
ing far,

And having yoked to her immortal car  
The beam-invested steeds, whose

necks on high [sky  
Curve back, she drives to a remoter

A western Crescent, borne impetu-  
ously.

Then is made full the circle of her  
light,

And as she grows, her beams more  
bright and bright,

Are poured from Heaven, where she  
is hovering then,

A wonder and a sign to mortal men.  
The Son of Saturn with this glori-  
ous Power

Mingled in love and sleep—to whom  
she bore,

Pandeia, a bright maid of beauty rare  
Among the gods, whose lives eternal

are.

Hail Queen, great Moon, white-  
armed Divinity,

Fair-haired and favourable, thus with  
thee,

My song beginning, by its music sweet  
Shall make immortal many a glorious

feat

Of demigods, with lovely lips, so well  
Which minstrels, servants of the  
muses, tell.

## TO THE EARTH, MOTHER OF ALL

O UNIVERSAL mother, who dost keep  
From everlasting thy foundations

deep,

Eldest of things, Great Earth, I sing  
of thee ;

All shapes that have their dwelling in  
the sea,

All things that fly, or on the ground  
divine

Live, move, and there are nourished—  
 these are thine ;  
 These from thy wealth thou dost sustain ; from thee  
 Fair babes are born, and fruits on every tree  
 Hang ripe and large, revered Divinity !  
 The life of mortal men beneath thy sway  
 Is held ; thy power both gives and takes away !  
 Happy are they whom thy mild favours nourish,  
 All things unstinted round them grow and flourish. • [field  
 For them, endures the life-sustaining  
 Its load of harvest, and their cattle yield  
 Large increase, and their house with wealth is filled.  
 Such honoured dwell in cities fair and free,  
 The homes of lovely women, prosperously ;  
 Their sons exult in youth's new budding gladness,  
 And their fresh daughters free from care or sadness,  
 With bloom-inwoven dance and happy song,  
 On the soft flowers the meadow-grass among,  
 Leap round them sporting—such delights by thee  
 Are given, rich Power, revered Divinity.  
 Mother of gods, thou wife of starry Heaven,  
 Farewell ! be thou propitious, and be given  
 A happy life for this brief melody,  
 Nor thou nor other songs shall unremembered be.

## THE CYCLOPS

A SATYRIC DRAMA

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK  
OF EURIPIDES

SILENUS

CHORUS OF SATYRS

ULYSSES

THE CYCLOPS

*Silenus.* O BACCHUS, what a world  
 of toil, both now

And ere these limbs were overworn  
 with age,  
 Have I endured for thee ! First,  
 when thou fledst  
 The mountain nymphs who nursed  
 thee, driven afar  
 By the strange madness Juno sent  
 upon thee ;  
 Then in the battle of the sons of  
 Earth,  
 When I stood foot by foot close to  
 thy side,  
 No unpropitious fellow combatant,  
 And, driving through his shield my  
 winged spear,  
 Slew vast Enceladus. Consider now,  
 Is it a dream of which I speak to thee?  
 By Jove it is not, for you have the  
 trophies !  
 And now I suffer more than all before.  
 For, when I heard that Juno had de-  
 vised  
 A tedious voyage for you, I put to sea  
 With all my children quaint in search  
 of you,  
 And I myself stood on the beaked  
 prow  
 And fixed the naked mast ; and all my  
 boys,  
 Leaning upon their oars, with splash  
 and strain  
 Made white with foam the green and  
 purple sea,—  
 And so we sought you, king. We  
 were sailing  
 Near Malea, when an eastern wind  
 arose,  
 And drove us to this wild Ætnean  
 rock ;  
 The one-eyed children of the Ocean  
 god,  
 The man-destroying Cyclopes in-  
 habit,  
 On this wild shore, their solitary  
 caves ;  
 And one of these, named Polypheme,  
 has caught us  
 To be his slaves ; and so, for all de-  
 light  
 Of Bacchic sports, sweet dance and  
 melody,  
 We keep this lawless giant's wander-  
 ing flocks.  
 My sons indeed, on far declivities,  
 Young things themselves, tend on  
 the youngling sheep.

But I remain to fill the water casks,  
Or sweeping the hard floor, or minis-  
tering  
Some impious and abominable meal  
To the fell Cyclops. I am wearied of  
it!

And now I must scrape up the littered  
floor

With this great iron rake, so to receive  
My absent master and his evening  
sheep

In a cave neat and clean. Even now  
I see

My children tending the flocks hither-  
ward.

Ha! what is this? are your Sicin-  
nian measures

Even now the same as when with  
dance and song

You brought young Bacchus to  
Athæa's halls?

\* \* \*

### CHORUS OF SATYRS.

#### STROPHE.

Where has he of race divine  
Wandered in the winding rocks?  
Here the air is calm and fine  
For the father of the flocks;—  
Here the grass is soft and sweet,  
And the river eddies meet  
In the trough beside the cave,  
Bright as in their fountain wave.—  
Neither here, nor on the dew  
Of the lawny uplands feeding.  
Oh, you come!—a stone at you  
Will I throw to mend your breed-  
ing;—

Get along, you horned thing,  
Wild, seditious, rambling!

#### EPODE.<sup>1</sup>

An Iacchic melody  
To the golden Aphrodite  
Will I lift, as erst did I  
Seeking her and her delight  
With the Mænads, whose white feet  
To the music glance and fleet.  
Bacchus, O beloved, where,  
Shaking wide thy yellow hair,  
Wanderest thou alone, afar?  
To the one-eyed Cyclops, we,

<sup>1</sup> The Antistrophe is omitted.

Who by right thy servants are,  
Minister in misery,  
In these wretched goat-skins clad,  
Far from thy delights and thee.

*Silenus.* Be silent, sons; 'command  
the slaves to drive

The gathered flocks into the rock-  
roofed cave.

*Chorus.* Go! But what needs this  
serious haste, O father?

*Silenus.* I see a Grecian vessel on  
the coast,

And thence the rowers with some  
general,

Approaching to this cave. About  
their necks

Hang empty vessels, as they wanted  
food,

And water-flasks.—O miserable  
strangers!

Whence come they, that they know  
not what and who

My master is, approaching in ill hour  
The inhospitable roof of Polypheme,  
And the Cyclopan jaw-bone, man-  
destroying?

Be silent, Satyrs, while I ask and hear,  
Whence coming, they arrive the  
Ætnean hill.

*Ulysses.* Friends, can you show me  
some clear water spring,

The remedy of our thirst? Will any  
one

Furnish with food seamen in want of  
it?

Ha! what is this? We seem to be  
arrived

At the blithe court of Bacchus. I ob-  
serve

This sportive band of Satyrs near the  
caves.

First let me greet the elder.—Hail!

*Silenus.* Hail thou,

O Stranger! Tell thy country and  
thy race.

*Ulysses.* The Ithacan Ulysses and  
the king

Of Cephalonia.

*Silenus.* Oh! I know the man,  
Wordy and shrewd, the son of Sisyp-  
hus.

*Ulysses.* I am the same, but do not  
rail upon me.—

*Silenus.* Whence sailing do you  
come to Sicily?

*Ulysses.* From Ilion, and from the Trojan toils.

*Silenus.* How touched you not at your paternal shore?

*Ulysses.* The strength of tempests bore me here by force.

*Silenus.* The self-same accident occurred to me.

*Ulysses.* Were you then driven here by stress of weather?

*Silenus.* Following the pirates who had kidnapped Bacchus.

*Ulysses.* What land is this, and who inhabit it?— [Sicily]

*Silenus.* Ætna, the loftiest peak in

*Ulysses.* And are there walls, and tower-surrounded towns?

*Silenus.* There are not. These lone rocks are bare of men.

*Ulysses.* And who possess the land? the race of beasts?

*Silenus.* Cyclops, who live in caverns, not in houses.

*Ulysses.* Obeying whom? Or is the state popular?

*Silenus.* Shepherds: no one obeys any in aught.

*Ulysses.* How live they? do they sow the corn of Ceres?

*Silenus.* On milk and cheese, and on the flesh of sheep.

*Ulysses.* Have they the Bromian drink from the vine's stream?

*Silenus.* Ah! no; they live in an ungracious land.

*Ulysses.* And are they just to strangers?—hospitable?

*Silenus.* They think the sweetest thing a stranger brings,

Is his own flesh.

*Ulysses.* What! do they eat man's flesh?

*Silenus.* No one comes here who is not eaten up.

*Ulysses.* The Cyclops now—where is he? Not at home?

*Silenus.* Absent on Ætna, hunting with his dogs.

*Ulysses.* Knowst thou what thou must do to aid us hence?

*Silenus.* I know not: we will help you all we can.

*Ulysses.* Provide us food, of which we are in want.

*Silenus.* Here is not anything, as I said, but meat.

*Ulysses.* But meat is a sweet remedy for hunger.

*Silenus.* Cow's milk there is, and store of curdled cheese.

*Ulysses.* Bring out: I would see all before I bargain.

*Silenus.* But how much gold will you engage to give?

*Ulysses.* I bring no gold, but Bacchic juice.

*Silenus.* O joy!

'Tis long since these dry lips were wet with wine.

*Ulysses.* Maron, the son of the god, gave it me.

*Silenus.* Whom I have nursed a baby in my arms.

*Ulysses.* The son of Bacchus, for your clearer knowledge.

*Silenus.* Have you it now? or is it in the ship?

*Ulysses.* Old man, this skin contains it, which you see.

*Silenus.* Why this would hardly be a mouthful for me.

*Ulysses.* Nay, twice as much as you can draw from thence.

*Silenus.* You speak of a fair fountain, sweet to me.

*Ulysses.* Would you first taste of the unmingled wine?

*Silenus.* 'Tis just—tasting invites the purchaser.

*Ulysses.* Here is the cup, together with the skin.

*Silenus.* Pour: that the draught may fillip my remembrance.

*Ulysses.* See!

*Silenus.* Papaiaæx! what a sweet smell it has!

*Ulysses.* You see it then?—

*Silenus.* By Jove, no! but I smell it.

*Ulysses.* Taste, that you may not praise it in words only.

*Silenus.* Babai! Great Bacchus calls me forth to dance!

Joy! joy!

*Ulysses.* Did it flow sweetly down your throat?

*Silenus.* So that it tingled to my very nails.

*Ulysses.* And in addition I will give you gold.

*Silenus.* Let gold alone! Only unlock the cask.



*Ulysses.* Bring out some cheeses now, or a young goat.

*Silenus.* That will I do, despising any master.

Yes, let me drink one cup, and I will give

All that the Cyclops feed upon their mountains.

\* \* \*  
*Chorus.* Ye have taken Troy, and laid your hands on Helen?

*Ulysses.* And utterly destroyed the race of Priam.

*Silenus.* \* \* \*

The wanton wretch! She was bewitched to see

The many-coloured anklets and the chain

Of woven gold which girt the neck of Paris,

And so she left that good man Menelaus.

There should be no more women in the world

But such as are reserved for me alone.—

See, here are sheep, and here are goats, Ulysses;

Here are unsparing cheeses of pressed milk;

Take them; depart with what good speed ye may;

First leaving my reward, the Bacchic dew

Of joy-inspiring grapes.

*Ulysses.* Ah me! Alas!

What shall we do? the Cyclops is at hand!

Old man, we perish! whither can we fly?

*Silenus.* Hide yourselves quick within that hollow rock.

*Ulysses.* 'Twere perilous to fly into the net.

*Silenus.* The cavern has recesses numberless;

Hide yourselves quick.

*Ulysses.* That will I never do:

The mighty Troy would be indeed disgraced

If I should fly one man. How many times

Have I withstood with shield immovable,

Ten thousand Phrygians!—If I needs must die,

Yet will I die with glory;—if I live, The praise which I have gained will yet remain.

*Silenus.* What, ho! assistance, comrades, haste, assistance!

*The Cyclops, Silenus, Ulysses; Chorus.*

*Cyclops.* What is this tumult? Bacchus is not here,

Nor tympanies nor brazen castanets. How are my young lambs in the cavern? Milking

Their dams, or playing by their sides? And is

The new cheese pressed into the bulrush baskets?

Speak! I'll beat some of you till you rain tears—

Look up, not downwards, when I speak to you.

*Silenus.* See! I now gape at Jupiter himself,

I stare upon Orion and the stars.

*Cyclops.* Well, is the dinner fitly cooked and laid?

*Silenus.* All ready, if your throat is ready too.

*Cyclops.* Are the bowls full of milk besides?

*Silenus.* O'erbrimming; So you may drink a tunful if you will.

*Cyclops.* Is it ewe's milk, or cow's milk, or both mixed?—

*Silenus.* Both, either; only pray don't swallow me.

*Cyclops.* By no means.—

\* \* \*

What is this crowd I see beside the stalls?

Outlaws or thieves? for near my cavern home [two

I see my young lambs coupled two by two

With willow bands; mixed with my cheeses lie

Their implements; and this old fellow here

Has his bald head broken with stripes.

*Silenus.* Ah me! I have been beaten till I burn with fever.

*Cyclops.* By whom? Who laid his fist upon your head?

*Silenus.* Those men, because I would not suffer them To steal your goods.

*Cyclops.* Did not the rascals know

I am a god, sprung from the race of heaven?

*Silenus.* I told them so, but they bore off your things,

And ate the cheese in spite of all I said,

And carried out the lambs,—and said, moreover,

They'd pin you down with a three-cubit collar,

And pull your vitals out through your one eye,

Torture your back with stripes; then, binding you,

Throw you as ballast into the ship's hold,

And then deliver you, a slave, to move Enormous rocks, or found a vestibule.

*Cyclops.* In truth? Nay, haste, and place in order quickly

The cooking knives, and heap upon the hearth,

And kindle it, a great faggot of wood.—

As soon as they are slaughtered, they shall fill

My belly, broiling warm from the live coals,

Or boiled and seethed within the bubbling cauldron.

I am quite sick of the wild mountain game;

Of stags and lions I have gorged enough,

And I grow hungry for the flesh of men.

*Silenus.* Nay, master, something new is very pleasant

After one thing for ever, and of late Very few strangers have approached

our cave.

*Ulysses.* Hear, Cyclops, a plain tale on the other side.

We, wanting to buy food, came from our ship

Into the neighbourhood of your cave, and here

This old Silenus gave us in exchange These lambs for wine, the which he

took and drank,

And all by mutual compact, without force.

There is no word of truth in what he says,

For stily he was selling all your store  
*Silenus.* I? May you perish, wretch—

*Ulysses.* If I speak false!

*Silenus.* Cyclops, I swear by Neptune who begot thee,

By mighty Triton and by Nereus old, Calypso and the glaucous ocean

Nymphs,

The sacred waves and all the race of fishes—

Be these the witnesses, my dear sweet master,

My darling little Cyclops, that I never

Gave any of your stores to these false strangers.—

If I speak false may those whom most I love,

My children, perish wretchedly!

*Chorus.* There stop!

I saw him giving these things to the strangers.

If I speak false, then may my father perish,

But do not thou wrong hospitality,

*Cyclops.* You lie! I swear that he is juster far

Than Rhadamanthus—I trust more in him.

But let me ask, whence have ye sailed, O strangers?

Who are you? and what city nourished ye?

*Ulysses.* Our race is Ithacan.—

Having destroyed

The town of Troy, the tempests of the sea

Have driven us on thy land, O Polypheme.

*Cyclops.* What, have ye shared in the unenvied spoil

Of the false Helen, near Scamander's stream?

*Ulysses.* The same, having endured a woeful toil.

*Cyclops.* O basest expedition! Sailed ye not

From Greece to Phrygia for one woman's sake?

*Ulysses.* 'Twas the gods' work—no mortal was in fault.

But, O great offspring of the Ocean King!

We pray thee and admonish thee with freedom,

That thou dost spare thy friends who  
 visit thee,  
 And place no impious food within thy  
 jaws.  
 For in the depths of Greece we have  
 unprepared  
 Temples to thy great father, which are  
 all  
 His houses. The sacred bay of  
 Tænarus  
 Remains inviolate, and each dim  
 recess  
 Scooped high on the Malean promon-  
 tory,  
 And æry Sunium's silver-veined crag,  
 Which divine Pallas keeps unprofaned  
 ever,  
 The Gerastian asylums, and whate'er  
 Within wide Greece our enterprise has  
 kept  
 From Phrygian contumely; and in  
 which  
 You have a common care, for you in-  
 habit  
 The skirts of Grecian land, under the  
 roots  
 Of Ætna and its crags, spotted with  
 fire.  
 Turn then to converse under human  
 laws;  
 Receive us shipwrecked suppliants,  
 and provide  
 Food, clothes, and fire, and hospitable  
 gifts;  
 Nor, fixing upon oxen-piercing spits  
 Our limbs, so fill your belly and your  
 jaws.  
 Priam's wide land has widowed Greece  
 enough;  
 And weapon-winged murder heaped  
 together  
 Enough of dead, and wives are hus-  
 bandless,  
 And ancient women and grey fathers  
 wail  
 Their childless age:—if you should  
 roast the rest,  
 And 'tis a bitter feast that you pre-  
 pare,  
 Where then would any turn? Yet be  
 persuaded;  
 Forgo the lust of your jaw-bone;  
 prefer  
 Pious humanity to wicked will;  
 Many have bought too dear their evil  
 joys.

*Silenus.* Let me advise you; do  
 not spare a morsel  
 Of all his flesh. If you should eat  
 his tongue  
 You would become most eloquent, O  
 Cyclops.  
*Cyclops.* Wealth, my good fellow,  
 is the wise man's god;  
 All other things are a pretence and  
 boast.  
 What are my father's ocean promon-  
 tories,  
 The sacred rocks whereon he dwells,  
 to me?  
 Stranger, I laugh to scorn Jove's  
 thunderbolt,  
 I know not that his strength is more  
 than mine  
 As to the rest I care not.—When he  
 pours  
 Rain from above, I have a close  
 pavilion  
 Under this rock, in which I lie supine,  
 Feasting on a roast calf or some wild  
 beast,  
 And drinking pans of milk, and glori-  
 ously  
 Emulating the thunder of high hea-  
 ven.  
 And when the Thracian wind pours  
 down the snow,  
 I wrap my body in the skins of beasts,  
 Kindle a fire, and bid the snow whirl  
 on.  
 The earth by force, whether it will or  
 no,  
 Bringing forth grass, fattens my flocks  
 and herds,  
 Which, to what other god but to my-  
 self  
 And this great belly, first of deities,  
 Should I be bound to sacrifice? I  
 well know  
 The wise man's only Jupiter is this,  
 To eat and drink during his little day,  
 And give himself no care. And as for  
 those  
 Who complicate with laws the life of  
 man,  
 I freely give them tears for their re-  
 ward.  
 I will not cheat my soul of its delight,  
 Or hesitate in dining upon you:—  
 And that I may be quit of all demands,  
 These are my hospitable gifts;—  
 fierce fire

And yon ancestral cauldron, which  
o'erbubbling  
Shall finely cook your miserable flesh.  
Creep in !—

\* \* \*

*Ulysses.* Ay, ay ! I have escaped  
the Trojan toils,  
I have escaped the sea, and now I fall  
Under the cruel grasp of one impious  
man.

O Pallas, mistress, goddess, sprung  
from Jove,  
Now, now, assist me ! Mightier toils  
than Troy  
Are these ;—I totter on the chasms of  
peril ;—

And thou who inhabitest the thrones  
Of the bright stars, look, hospitable  
Jove,  
Upon this outrage of thy deity,  
Otherwise be considered as no god.

CHORUS (*alone*).

For your gaping gulf and your gullet  
wide

The ravine is ready on every side ;  
The limbs of the strangers are cooked  
and done,

There is boiled meat, and roast meat,  
and meat from the coal,

You may chop it, and tear it, and  
gnash it for fun,

A hairy goat's skin contains the whole.  
Let me but escape, and ferry me o'er  
The stream of your wrath to a safer  
shore.

The Cyclops Ætnean is cruel and bold,  
He murders the strangers  
That sit on his hearth,  
And dreads no avengers  
To rise from the earth.

He roasts the men before they are cold,  
He snatches them broiling from the  
coal.

And from the cauldron pulls them  
whole,

And minces their flesh and gnaws  
their bone

With his cursed teeth, till all be gone.

Farewell, foul pavilion !  
Farewell, rites of dread !  
The Cyclops vermilion,

With slaughter uncloying,  
Now feasts on the dead,  
In the flesh of strangers joying !

*Ulysses.* O Jupiter ! I saw within  
the cave  
Horrible things ; deeds to be feigned  
in words,  
But not believed as being done.

*Chorus.* What ! sawest thou the  
impious Polypheme  
Feasting upon your loved compan-  
ions now ?

*Ulysses.* Selecting two, the plump-  
est of the crowd,  
He grasped them in his hands.—

*Chorus.* Unhappy men !

\* \* \*

*Ulysses.* Soon as we came into this  
craggy place,  
Kindling a fire, he cast on the broad  
hearth

The knotty limbs of an enormous oak,  
Three waggon-loads at least, and then  
he strewed

Upon the ground, beside the red fire  
light,

His couch of pine leaves ; and he  
milked the cows,

And pouring forth the white milk,  
filled a bowl

Three cubits wide and four in depth,  
as much

As would contain four amphoræ, and  
bound it

With ivy wreaths ; then placed upon  
the fire

A brazen pot to boil, and make red  
hot

The points of spits, not sharpened  
with the sickle,

But with a fruit-tree bough, and with  
the jaws

Of axes for Ætnean slaughterings.<sup>1</sup>

And when this god-abandoned cook  
of hell

Had made all ready, he seized two of  
us.

And killed them in a kind of measured  
manner ;

For he flung one against the brazen  
rivets

Of the huge cauldron, and seized the  
other

<sup>1</sup> I confess I do not understand this. *Note of the Author*

By the foot's tendon, and knocked  
out his brains  
Upon the sharp edge of the craggy  
stone:  
Then peeled his flesh with a great  
cooking knife,  
And put him down to roast. The  
other's limbs  
He chopped into the cauldron to be  
boiled.  
And I, with the tears raining from  
my eyes,  
Stood near the Cyclops, ministering  
to him;  
The rest, in the recesses of the cave,  
Clung to the rock like bats, bloodless  
with fear.  
When he was filled with my compan-  
ions' flesh,  
He threw himself upon the ground,  
and sent  
A loathsome exhalation from his maw.  
Then a divine thought came to me. I  
filled  
The cup of Maron, and I offered him  
To taste, and said:—"Child of the  
Ocean-god,  
Behold what drink the vines of Greece  
produce,  
The exultation and the joy of Bac-  
chus."  
He, satiated with his unnatural food,  
Received it, and at one draught drank  
it off,  
And, taking my hand, praised me:—  
"Thou hast given  
A sweet draught after a sweet meal,  
dear-guest."  
And I, perceiving that it pleased him,  
filled  
Another cup, well knowing that the  
wine  
Would wound him soon and take a  
sure revenge.  
And the charm fascinated him, and I  
Plied him cup after cup, until the  
drink  
Had warmed his entrails, and he sang  
aloud  
In concert with my wailing fellow-  
seamen  
A hideous discord—and the cavern  
rung.  
I have stolen out, so that if you will  
You may achieve my safety and your  
own.

But say, do you desire, or not, to fly  
This uncompanionable man, and  
dwell,  
As was your wont, among the Grecian  
nymphs,  
Within the fanes of your beloved god?  
Your father there within agrees to it,  
But he is weak and overcome with  
wine,  
And caught as if with birdlime by the  
cup,  
He claps his wings and crows in dot-  
ing joy,  
You who are young escape with me,  
and find  
Bacchus your ancient friend; un-  
suited he  
To this rude Cyclops.  
*Chorus.* O my dearest friend,  
That I could see that day, and leave  
for ever  
The impious Cyclops.

\* \* \*

*Ulysses.* Listen then what a punish-  
ment I have  
For this fell monster, how secure a  
flight  
From your hard servitude.

*Chorus.* Oh! sweeter far  
Than is the music of an Asian lyre  
Would be the news of Polypheme  
destroyed.

*Ulysses.* Delighted with the Bac-  
chic drink, he goes  
To call his brother Cyclops—who in-  
habit

A village upon *Ætna* not far off.  
*Chorus.* I understand: catching  
him when alone,

You think by some measure to dis-  
patch him,  
Or thrust him from the precipice.

*Ulysses.* Oh no;  
Nothing of that kind; my device is  
subtle.

*Chorus.* How then? I heard of old  
that thou wert wise.

*Ulysses.* I will dissuade him from  
this plan, by saying  
It were unwise to give the Cyclopes  
This precious drink, which if enjoyed  
alone

Would make life sweeter for a longer  
time.

When vanquished by the Bacchic  
power, he sleeps,

There is a trunk of olive-wood within,  
Whose point, having made sharp with  
this good sword,  
I will conceal in fire, and when I see  
It is alight, will fix it, burning yet,  
Within the socket of the Cyclops' eye,  
And melt it out with fire—as when a  
man

Turns by its handle a great auger  
round,  
Fitting the framework of a ship with  
beams.

So will I in the Cyclops' fiery eye  
Turn round the brand, and dry the  
pupil up.

*Chorus.* Joy! I am mad with joy  
at your device.

*Ulysses.* And then with you, my  
friends, and the old man,  
We'll load the hollow depth of our  
black ship,  
And row with double strokes from this  
dread shore.

*Chorus.* May I, as in libations to a  
god,

Share in the blinding lum with the  
red brand?

I would have some communion in his  
death.

*Ulysses.* Doubtless; the brand is  
a great brand to hold.

*Chorus.* Oh! I would lift a hundred  
waggon-loads,

If like a wasp's nest I could scoop the  
eye out

Of the detested Cyclops.

*Ulysses.* Silence now!

Ye know the close device—and when  
I call,

Look ye obey the masters of the craft.  
I will not save myself and leave be-  
hind

My comrades in the cave: I might  
escape,

Having got clear from that obscure  
recess,

But 'twere unjust to leave in jeopardy  
The dear companions who sailed here  
with me.

#### CHORUS.

Come! who is first, that with his hand  
Will urge down the burning brand  
Through the lids, and quench and  
pierce  
The Cyclops' eye so fiery fierce?

SEMI-CHORUS I.—*Song within.*  
Listen! listen! he is coming,  
A most hideous discord humming,  
Drunken, museless, awkward, yelling,  
Far along his rocky dwelling;  
Let us with some comic spell  
Teach the yet unteachable.  
By all means he must be blinded,  
If my counsel be but minded.

#### SEMI-CHORUS II.

Happy those made odorous  
With the dew which sweet grapes  
weep,  
To the village hastening thus,  
Seek the vines that soothe to sleep,  
Having first embraced thy friend,  
There in luxury without end,  
With the strings of yellow hair,  
Of thy voluptuous leman fair,  
Shall sit playing on a bed!—  
Speak, what door is opened?

#### CYCLOPS.

Ha! ha! ha! I'm full of wine,  
Heavy with the joy divine,  
With the young feast oversated.  
Like a merchant's vessel freighted  
To the water's edge, my crop  
Is laden to the gullet's top.  
The fresh meadow grass of spring  
Tempt me forth, thus wandering  
To my brothers on the mountains,  
Who shall share the wine's sweet  
fountains.  
Bring the cask, O stranger, bring!

#### CHORUS.

One with eyes the fairest  
Cometh from his dwelling;  
Some one loves thee, rarest,  
Bright beyond my telling.  
In thy grace thou shinest  
Like some nymph divinest,  
In her caverns dewy;—  
All delights pursue thee,  
Soon pied flowers, sweet-breathing,  
Shall thy head be wreathing.

*Ulysses.* Listen, O Cyclops, for I am  
well skilled

In Bacchus, whom I gave thee of to  
drink.

*Cyclops.* What sort of god is Bac-  
chus then accounted?

*Ulysses.* The greatest among men  
for joy of life.

*Cyclops.* I gulped him down with  
very great delight.

*Ulysses.* This is a god who never  
injures men.

*Cyclops.* How does the god like  
living in a skin?

*Ulysses.* He is content wherever he  
is put.

*Cyclops.* Gods should not have their  
body in a skin.

*Ulysses.* If he give joy, what is his  
skin to you?

*Cyclops.* I hate the skin, but love  
the wine within.

*Ulysses.* Stay here; now drink,  
and make your spirit glad.

*Cyclops.* Should I not share this  
liquor with my brothers?

*Ulysses.* Keep it yourself, and be  
more honoured so.

*Cyclops.* I were more useful, giving  
to my friends.

*Ulysses.* But village mirth breeds  
contests, broils, and blows.

*Cyclops.* When I am drunk none  
shall lay hands on me.

*Ulysses.* A drunken man is better  
within doors.

*Cyclops.* He is a fool, who drinking  
loves not mirth.

*Ulysses.* But he is wise who, drunk,  
remains at home.

*Cyclops.* What shall I do, *Silenus*?  
Shall I stay?

*Silenus.* Stay—for what need have  
you of pot companions?

*Cyclops.* Indeed this place is close-  
ly carpeted

With flowers and grass.

*Silenus.* And in the sun-warm  
noon

'Tis sweet to drink. Lie down beside  
me now,

Placing your mighty sides upon the  
ground.

*Cyclops.* What do you put the cup  
behind me for?

*Silenus.* That no one here may  
touch it.

*Cyclops.* Thievish one!  
You want to drink;—here, place it in  
the midst.

And thou, O stranger, tell how art  
thou called?

*Ulysses.* My name is Nobody.  
What favour now

Shall I receive to praise you at your  
hands?

*Cyclops.* I'll feast on you the last of  
your companions.

*Ulysses.* You grant your guest a  
fair reward, O *Cyclops*.

*Cyclops.* Ha! what is this? Steal-  
ing the wine, you rogue!

*Silenus.* It was this stranger kiss-  
ing me, because  
I looked so beautiful.

*Cyclops.* You shall repent  
For kissing the coy wine that loves  
you not.

*Silenus.* By Jupiter! you said that  
I am fair.

*Cyclops.* Pour out, and only give  
me the cup full.

*Silenus.* How is it mixed? Let me  
observe.

*Cyclops.* Curse you!  
Give it me so.

*Silenus.* Not till I see you wear  
That coronal, and taste the cup to you.

*Cyclops.* Thou wily traitor!

*Silenus.* But the wine is sweet.  
Ay, you will roar if you are caught in  
drinking.

*Cyclops.* See now, my lip is clean  
and all my beard.

*Silenus.* Now put your elbow right,  
and drink again.

As you see me drink— \* \* \*

*Cyclops.* How now?

*Silenus.* Ye gods, what a deli-  
cious gulp!

*Cyclops.* Guest, take it;—you pour  
out the wine for me.

*Ulysses.* The wine is well accus-  
tomed to my hand.

*Cyclops.* Pour out the wine!

*Ulysses.* I pour; only be silent.

*Cyclops.* Silence is a hard task to  
him who drinks.

*Ulysses.* Take it and drink it off;  
leave not a drop.

Oh, that the drinker died with his own  
draught!

*Cyclops.* Papai! the vine must be  
a sapient plant.

*Ulysses.* If you drink much after a  
mighty feast,  
Moistening your thirsty maw, you  
will sleep well;

If you leave aught, Bacchus will dry  
you up.\*

*Cyclops.* Ho! ho! I can scarce  
rise. What pure delight!

The heavens and earth appear to  
whirl about

Confusedly. I see the throne of Jove  
And the clear congregation of the  
gods.

Now if the Graces tempted me to kiss,  
I would not, for the loveliest of them  
all

I would not leave this Ganymede.

*Silenus.* Polypheme,

I am the Ganymede of Jupiter.

*Cyclops.* By Jove! you are; I bore  
you off from Dardanus.

ULYSSES and the CHORUS.

*Ulysses.* Come, boys of Bacchus,  
children of high race,

This man within is folded up in sleep,  
And soon will vomit flesh from his fell  
maw;

The brand under the shed thrusts out  
its smoke,

No preparation needs, but to burn out  
The monster's eye;—but bear your-  
selves like men.

*Chorus.* We will have courage like  
the adamant rock.

All things are ready for you here; go  
in; [noise.]

Before our father shall perceive the  
*Ulysses.* Vulcan, Ætnean king!  
burn out with fire

The shining eye of this thy neighbour-  
ing monster!

And thou, O Sleep, nursling of gloomy  
night,

Descend unmixed on this god-hated  
beast,

And suffer not Ulysses and his com-  
rades,

Returning from their famous Trojan  
toils

To perish by this man, who cares not  
either

For god or mortal; or I needs must  
think

That Chance is a supreme divinity,  
And things divine are subject to her  
power.

\* CHORUS.

Soon a crab the throat will seize  
Of him who feeds upon his guest.

S.P.

Fire will burn his lamp-like eyes  
In revenge of such a feast!  
A great oak stump now is lying  
In the ashes yet undying.

Come, Maron, come!

Raging let him fix the doom,

Let him tear the eyelid up,

Of the Cyclops—that his cup

May be evil!

Oh, I long to dance and revel

With sweet Bromian, long desired,

In loved ivy-wreaths attired;

Leaving this abandoned home—

Will the moment ever come?

*Ulysses.* Be silent, ye wild things!

Nay, hold your peace,

And keep your lips quite close; dare  
not to breathe,

Or spit, or c'en wink, lest ye wake the  
monster,

Until his eye be tortured out with fire.

*Chorus.* Nay, we are silent, and we  
chaw the air.

*Ulysses.* Come now, and lend a  
hand to the great stake

Within—it is delightfully red hot.

*Chorus.* You then command who  
first should seize the stake

To burn the Cyclops' eye, that all may  
share

In the great enterprise.

*Semi-Chorus I.* We are too few;  
We cannot at this distance from the

door  
Thrust fire into his eye.

*Semi-Chorus II.* And we just  
now

Have become lame; cannot move  
hand nor foot.

*Chorus.* The same thing has oc-  
cured to us;—our ankles

Are sprained with standing here, I  
know not how.

*Ulysses.* What, sprained with stand-  
ing still?

*Chorus.* And there is dust  
Or ashes in our eyes, I know not

whence.

*Ulysses.* Cowardly dogs, ye will  
not aid me, then?

*Chorus.* With pitying my own back  
and my backbone,

And with not wishing all my teeth  
knocked out!

L L



This cowardice comes of itself—but stay,

I know a famous Orphic incantation  
To make the brand stick of its own accord

Into the skull of this one-eyed son of Earth.

*Ulysses.* Of old I knew ye thus by nature; now

I know ye better.—I will use the aid  
Of my own comrades—yet though weak of hand

Speak cheerfully, that so ye may awaken

The courage of my friends with your blithe words.

*Chorus.* This I will do with peril of my life,

And blind you with my exhortations,  
Cyclops.

Hasten and thrust,  
And parch up to dust,  
The eye of the beast,  
Who feeds on his guest.  
Burn and blind  
The Ætnean hind!  
Scoop and draw,  
But beware lest he claw  
Your limbs near his maw.

*Cyclops.* Ah me! my eyesight is parched up to cinders.

*Chorus.* What a sweet pæan! sing me that again!

*Cyclops.* Ah me! indeed, what woe has fallen upon me!

But, wretched nothings, think ye not to flee

Out of this rock; I, standing at the outlet,

Will bar the way, and catch you as you pass.

*Chorus.* What are you roaring out, Cyclops?

*Cyclops.* I perish!

*Chorus.* For you are wicked.

*Cyclops.* And besides miserable.

*Chorus.* What, did you fall into the fire when drunk?

*Cyclops.* 'Twas Nobody destroyed me.

*Chorus.* Why then no one can be to blame.

*Cyclops.* I say 'twas Nobody Who blinded me.

*Chorus.* Why then, you are not blind!

*Cyclops.* I wish you were as blind as I am.

*Chorus.* Nay, It cannot be that no one made you blind.

*Cyclops.* You jeer me; where, I ask, is Nobody?

*Chorus.* No where, O Cyclops \* \* \*

*Cyclops.* It was that stranger ruined me:—the wretch

First gave me wine, and then burnt out my eye,

For wine is strong and hard to struggle with.

Have they escaped, or are they yet within?

*Chorus.* They stand under the darkness of the rock,  
And cling to it.

*Cyclops.* At my right hand or left?

*Chorus.* Close on your right.

*Cyclops.* Where?

*Chorus.* Near the rock itself.  
You have them.

*Cyclops.* Oh, misfortune on misfortune!

I've crack'd my skull.

*Chorus.* Now they escape you there.

*Cyclops.* Not there, although you say so.

*Chorus.* Not on that side.

*Cyclops.* Where then?

*Chorus.* They creep about you on your left.

*Cyclops.* Ah! I am mocked! They jeer me in my ills.

*Chorus.* Not there! he is a little there beyond you.

*Cyclops.* Detested wretch! where are you?

*Ulysses.* Far from you I keep with care this body of Ulysses.

*Cyclops.* What do you say? You proffer a new name.

*Ulysses.* My father named me so; and I have taken

A full revenge for your unnatural feast;

I should have done ill to have burned down Troy,

And not revenged the murder of my comrades.

*Cyclops.* Ai ! ai ! the ancient oracle  
is accomplished ;  
It said that I should have my eye-  
sight blinded  
By you coming from Troy ; yet it fore-  
told •  
That you should pay the penalty for  
this  
By wandering long over the homeless  
sea.

• *Ulysses.* I bid thee weep—con-  
sider what I say,  
I go towards the shore to drive my  
ship  
To mine own land, o'er the Sicilian  
wave.

*Cyclops.* Not so, if whelming you  
with this huge stone  
I can crush you and all your men to-  
gether ;  
I will descend upon the shore, though  
blind,  
Groping my way adown the steep  
ravine.

*Chorus.* And we, the shipmates of  
Ulysses now,  
Will serve our Bacchus all our happy  
lives.

## EPIGRAMS

## SPIRIT OF PLATO

FROM THE GREEK

"EAGLE! why soarest thou above that  
tomb ?

To what sublime and star-ypaven  
home

Floatest thou ? "

" I am the image of swift Plato's  
spirit.

Ascending heaven—Athens does in-  
herit

His corpse below."

## FROM THE GREEK

A MAN who was about to hang himself,  
Finding a purse, then threw away his  
rope ;

Th owner coming to reclaim his pelf,  
The halter found and used it. So is  
Hope

Changed for Despair—one laid upon  
the shelf,

We take the other, Under heaven's  
high cope  
Fortune is God—all you endure and  
do  
Depends on circumstance as much as  
you.

## TO STELLA

FROM PLATO

THOU wert the Morning Star among  
the living,  
Ere thy fair light had fled ;—  
Now, having died, thou art as Hes-  
perus, giving  
New splendour to the dead.

## FROM PLATO

KISSING Helena, together  
With my kiss, my soul beside it  
Came to my lips, and there I kept it,—  
For the poor thing had wandered  
thither,  
To follow where the kiss should guide  
it ;—  
O, cruel I, to intercept it !

SONNETS FROM THE GREEK OF  
MOSCHUS

Τὰν αἶα ται γλαυκὰν σταν ὠνέμος ἀτρίμα  
βαλλῆ, — κ. τ. λ.

I

WHEN winds that move not its calm  
surface sweep

The azure sea, I love the land no more ;  
The smiles of the serene and tranquil  
deep

Tempt my unquiet mind.—But when  
the roar

Of ocean's grey abyss resounds, and  
foam

Gathers upon the sea, and vast waves  
burst,

I turn from the drear aspect to the  
home

Of earth and its deep woods, where,  
interspersed,

When winds blow loud, pines make  
sweet melody ;

Whose house is some lone bark, whose  
toil the sea,

Whose prey, the wandering fish, an  
evil lot  
Has chosen.—But I my languid limbs  
will fling  
Beneath the plane, where the brook's  
murmuring  
Moves the calm spirit but disturbs it  
not.

## II

PAN loved his neighbour Echo, but  
that child  
Of Earth and Air pined for the Satyr  
leaping :  
The Satyr loved with wasting madness  
wild  
The bright nymph Lyda—and so the  
three went weeping.  
As Pan loved Echo, Echo loved the  
Satyr ;  
The Satyr, Lyda, and thus love con-  
sumed them.  
And thus to each—which was a woe-  
ful matter  
To bear what they inflicted, justice  
doomed them ;  
For, inasmuch as each might hate the  
lover,  
Each, loving, so was hated.—Ye that  
love not  
Be warned ; in thought turn this ex-  
ample over,  
That, when ye love, the like return  
ye prove not.

SONNET FROM THE ITALIAN  
' OF DANTE

DANTE ALIGHIERI TO GUIDO CAVAL-  
CANTI

GUIDO, I would that Lappo, thou, and  
I,  
Led by some strong enchantment,  
might ascend  
A magic ship, whose charmed sails  
should fly  
With winds at will where'er our  
thoughts might wend,  
So that no change, nor any evil  
chance,  
Should mar our joyous voyage ; but  
it might be,  
That even satiety should still en-  
hance

Between our hearts their strict com-  
munity ;  
And that the bounteous wizard then  
would place  
Vanna and Bice and my gentle love,  
Companions of our wandering, and  
would grace  
With passionate talk, wherever we  
might rove,  
Our time, and each were as content  
and free  
As I believe that thou and I should  
be.

## SCENES

## FROM

"THE MAGICO PRODIGIOSO" OF  
CALDERON

CYPRIAN *as a Student* ; CLARIN and  
MOSCON *as poor Scholars, with  
books*

*Cyprian.* IN the sweet solitude of  
this calm place,  
This intricate wild wilderness of trees  
And flowers and undergrowth of odor-  
ous plants,  
Leave me ; the books you brought  
out of the house  
To me are ever best society.  
And whilst with glorious festival and  
song  
Antioch now celebrates the consecra-  
tion  
Of a proud temple to great Jupiter,  
And bears his image in loud jubilee  
To its new shrine, I would consume  
what still  
Lives of the dying day, in studious  
thought,  
Far from the throng and turmoil.  
You, my friends,  
Go and enjoy the festival ; 't will  
Be worth the labour, and return for  
me  
When the sun seeks its grave among  
the billows,  
Which among dim grey clouds on the  
horizon  
Dance like white plumes upon a  
hearse ;—and here  
I shall expect you.  
*Moscon.* I cannot bring my  
mind,  
Great as my haste to see the festival

Certainly is, to leave you, Sir, without  
Just saying some three or four hun-  
dred words.

How is it possible that on a day  
Of such festivity, you can bring your  
mind

To come forth to a solitary country  
With three or four old books, and turn  
your back

On all this mirth?

*Clarín.* My master's in the  
right;

There is not anything more tiresome  
Than a procession day, with troops of  
men,

And dances, and all that.

*Moscon.* From first to last,  
*Clarín,* you are a temporising flatterer;  
You praise not what you feel, but  
what he does;—

Toad-eater!

*Clarín.* You lie—under a mis-  
take—

For this is the most civil sort of lie  
That can be given to a man's face. I  
now

Say what I think.

*Cyprian.* Enough, you foolish  
fellows,

Puffed up with your own doting ig-  
norance, [question.

You always take the two sides of one  
Now go, and as I said, return for me  
When night falls, veiling in its  
shadows wide

This glorious fabric of the universe.

*Moscon.* How happens it, although  
you can maintain

The folly of enjoying festivals,  
That yet you go there?

*Clarín.* Nay, the consequence  
Is clear:—who ever did what he ad-  
vises

Others to do?—

*Moscon.* Would that my feet  
were wings,

So would I fly to Livia. [Exit.

*Clarín.* To speak truth,

Livia is she who has surprised my  
heart;

But he is more than half way there.—  
Soho!

Livia, I come; good sport, Livia,  
soho! [Exit.

*Cyprian.* Now since I am alone, let  
me examine

The question which has long disturbed  
my mind

With doubt, since first I read in Plinius  
The words of mystic import and deep  
sense

In which he defines God. My intel-  
lect

Can find no God with whom these  
marks and signs

Fitly agree. It is a hidden truth  
Which I must fathom. [Reads.

Enter the DEVIL, as a fine Gentleman.

*Dæmon.* Search even as thou  
wilt,

But thou shalt never find what I can  
hide.

*Cyprian.* What noise is that among  
the boughs? Who moves?

What art thou?—

*Dæmon.* 'Tis a foreign gentle-  
man.

Even from this morning I have lost  
my way

In this wild place, and my poor horse,  
at last

Quite overcome, has stretched him-  
self upon

The enamelled tapestry of this mossy  
mountain,

And feeds and rests at the same time.  
I was

Upon my way to Antioch upon busi-  
ness

Of some importance, but wrapt up in  
cares

(Who is exempt from this inherit-  
ance?)

I parted from my company, and lost  
My way, and lost my servants and

my comrades.

*Cyprian.* 'Tis singular, that, even  
within the sight

Of the high towers of Antioch, you  
could lose

Your way. Of all the avenues and  
green paths

Of this wild wood there is not one but  
leads,

As to its centre, to the walls of Anti-  
och;

Take which you wil you cannot miss  
your road.

*Dæmon.* And such is ignorance!  
Even in the sight

Of knowledge it can draw no profit  
from it.

But, as it still is early, and as I  
Have no acquaintances in Antioch,  
Being a stranger there, I will even  
wait

The few surviving hours of the day,  
Until the night shall conquer it. I  
see,

Both by your dress and by the books  
in which

You find delight and company, that  
you

Are a great student ;—for my part,  
I feel

Much sympathy with such pursuits.  
*Cyprian.* Have you

Studied much ?—

*Dæmon.* No ;—and yet I know  
enough

Not to be wholly ignorant.

*Cyprian.* Pray, sir,  
What science may you know ?—

*Dæmon.* Many.

*Cyprian.* Alas !  
Much pains must we expend on one  
alone,

And even then attain it not ;—but you  
Have the presumption to assert that  
you

Know many without study.

*Dæmon.* And with truth.  
For, in the country whence I come,  
sciences

Require no learning,—they are known.

*Cyprian.* Oh, would  
I were of that bright country ! for in  
this

The more we study, we the more dis-  
cover

Our ignorance.

*Dæmon.* It is so true, that I  
Had so much arrogance as to oppose  
The chair of the most high Professor-  
ship,

And obtained many votes, and though  
I lost,

The attempt was still more glorious  
than the failure

Could be dishonourable : if you be-  
lieve not,

Let us refer it to dispute respecting  
That which you know best, and al-  
though I

Know not the opinion you maintain,  
and though

It be the true one, I will take the con-  
trary.

*Cyprian.* The offer gives me plea-  
sure. I am now

Debating with myself upon a passage  
Of Plinius, and my mind is racked  
with doubt

To understand and know who is the  
God

Of whom he speaks.

*Dæmon.* It is a passage, if  
I recollect it right, couched in these  
words :

" God is one supreme goodness, one  
pure essence,

One substance, and one sense, all  
sight, all hands."

*Cyprian.* 'Tis true.

*Dæmon.* What difficulty find  
you here ?

*Cyprian.* I do not recognise among  
the gods

The God defined by Plinius : if he  
must

Be supreme goodness, even Jupiter  
Is not supremely good ; because we see

His deeds are evil, and his attributes  
Tainted with mortal weakness. In

what manner

Can supreme goodness be consistent  
with

The passions of humanity ?

*Dæmon.* The wisdom  
Of the old world masked with the  
names of gods

The attributes of Nature and of Man ;  
A sort of popular philosophy.

*Cyprian.* This reply will not satisfy  
me, for

Such awe is due to the high name of  
God,

That ill should never be imputed.  
Then,

Examining the question with more  
care,

It follows, that the gods should always  
will

That which is best, were they su-  
preinely good.

How then does one will one thing,  
one another ?

And you may not say that "I allege  
Poetical or philosophic learning :—

Consider the ambiguous responses  
Of their oracular statues ; from two

shrines

Two armies shall obtain the assurance of

One victory. Is it not indisputable That two contending wills can never lead

To the same end? And, being opposite,

If one be good is not the other evil?

Evil in God is inconceivable;

But supreme goodness fails among the gods

Without their union.

*Dæmon.* I deny your major. These responses are means towards some end

Unfathomed by our intellectual beam.

They are the work of Providence, and more

The battle's loss may profit those who lose,

Than victory advantage those who win.

*Cyprian.* That I admit, and yet that God should not

(Falsehood is incompatible with deity)

Assure the victory, it would be enough

To have permitted the defeat; if God

Be all sight,—God, who beheld the truth,

Would not have given assurance of an end

Never to be accomplished; thus, although

The Deity may according to his attributes

Be well distinguished into persons, yet

Even in the minutest circumstance,

His essence must be one.

*Dæmon.* To attain the end, The affections of the actors in the scene

Must have been thus influenced by his voice.

*Cyprian.* But for a purpose thus subordinate

He might have employed genii, good or evil,—

A sort of spirits called so by the learned,

Who roam about inspiring good or evil,

And from whose influence and existence we

May well infer our immortality:—

Thus God might easily, without descending

To a gross falsehood in his proper person,

Have moved the affections by this mediation

To the just point.

*Dæmon.* These trifling contradictions

Do not suffice to impugn the unity

Of the high gods; in things of great importance

They still appear unanimous; consider

That glorious fabric—man, his workmanship,

Is stamped with one conception.

*Cyprian.* Who made man

Must have, methinks, the advantage of the others

If they are equal, might they not have risen

In opposition to the work, and being All hands, according to our author

here,

Have still destroyed even as the other made?

If equal in their power, and only unequal

In opportunity, which of the two

Will remain conqueror?

*Dæmon.* On impossible And false hypothesis, there can be

built

No argument. Say, what do you infer

From this?

*Cyprian.* That there must be a mighty God

Of supreme goodness and of highest grace,

All sight all hands, all truth, infallible

Without an equal and without a rival;

The cause of all things and the effect of nothing,

One power, one will, one substance, and one essence.

And, in whatever persons, one or two, His attributes may be distinguished,

one Sovereign power, one solitary essence, One cause of all cause. [*They rise.*

*Dæmon.* How can I impugn So clear a consequence?

*Cyprian.* Do you regret My victory?

*Dæmon.* Who but regrets a check  
In rivalry of wit ? I could reply  
And urge new difficulties, but will  
now

Depart, for I hear steps of men ap-  
proaching,

And it is time that I should now pur-  
sue

My journey to the city.

*Cyprian.* Go in peace !

*Dæmon.* Remain in peace ! Since  
thus it profits him

To study, I will wrap his senses up  
In sweet oblivion of all thought but of  
A piece of excellent beauty ; and, as I  
Have power given me to wage enmity  
Against Justina's soul, I will extract  
From one effect two vengeancees.

[*Exit.*

*Cyprian.* I never  
Met a more learned person. Let me  
now

Revolve this doubt again with careful  
mind. [*He reads.*

*Enter LELIO and FLORO.*

*Lelio.* Here stop. Those toppling  
rocks and tangled boughs,  
Impenetrable by the noonday beam,  
Shall be sole witnesses of what we—

*Floro.* Draw !  
If there were words, here is the place  
for deeds.

*Lelio.* Thou needest not instruct  
me ; well I know  
That in the field the silent tongue of  
steel

Speaks thus. [*They fight.*

*Cyprian.* Ha ! what is this ? *Lelio,*  
*Floro,*

Be it enough that Cyprian stands be-  
tween you,  
Although unarmed.

*Lelio.* Whence comest thou, to  
stand

Between me and my vengeance ?

*Floro.* From what rocks  
And desert cells ?

*Enter MOSCON and CLARIN.*

*Moscon.* Run, run, for where we  
left my master,  
We hear the clash of swords.

*Clarín.* I never  
Run to approach things of this sort.  
but only

To avoid them. Sir ! Cyprian ! Sir !  
*Cyprian.* Be silent, fellows ! What !  
two friends who are

In blood and fame the eyes and hope  
of Antioch ;

One of the noble men of the Colatti,  
The other son of the Governor, adven-  
ture

And cast away, on some slight cause  
no doubt,

Two lives, the honour of their coun-  
try ?

*Lelio.* Cyprian,

Although my high respect towards  
your person

Holds now my sword suspended, thou  
canst not

Restore it to the slumber of its scab-  
bard.

Thou knowest more of science than  
the duel ;

For when two men of honour take the  
field,

No counsel nor respect can make  
them friends,

But one must die in the pursuit.

*Floro.*

I pray  
That you depart hence with your  
people, and [*gun*  
Leave us to finish what we have be-  
Without advantage.

*Cyprian.* Though you may imagine  
That I know little of the laws of duel,  
Which vanity and valour instituted,  
You are in error. By my birth I am  
Held no less than yourselves to know  
the limits

Of honour and of infamy, nor has  
study

Quenched the free spirit which first  
ordered them ;

And thus to me, as to one well experi-  
enced

In the false quicksands of the sea of  
honour,

You may refer the merits of the case ;  
And if I should perceive in your rela-  
tion

That either has the right to satisfac-  
tion

From the other, I give you my word  
of honour

To leave you.

*Lelio.* Under this condition<sup>c</sup> then  
I will relate the cause, and you will  
cede

And must confess th' impossibility  
Of compromise ; for the same lady is  
Beloved by Floro and myself.

*Floro.* It seems  
Much to me that the light of day  
should look  
Upon that idol of my heart—but he—  
Leave us to fight, according to thy  
word.

*Cyprian.* Permit one question fur-  
ther : is the lady  
Impossible to hope or not ?

*Lelio.* She is  
So excellent, that if the light of day  
Should excite Floro's jealousy, it were  
Without just cause, for even the light  
of day

Trembles to gaze on her.

*Cyprian.* Would you for your  
Part marry her ?

*Floro.* Such is my confidence.

*Cyprian.* And you ?

*Lelio.* O, would that I could lift  
my hope  
So high ! for, though she is extremely  
poor,

Her virtue is her dowry.

*Cyprian.* And if you both  
Would marry her, is it not weak and  
vain,

Culpable and unworthy, thus before-  
hand

To slur her honour ? What would  
the world say

If one should slay the other, and if she  
Should afterwards espouse the mur-  
derer ?

[*The rivals agree to refer their  
quarrel to CYPRIAN ; who, in  
consequence, visits JUSTINA,  
and becomes enamoured of her :  
she disdains him, and he retires  
to a solitary sea-shore.*

## SCENE II

CYPRIAN.

O memory ! permit it not  
That the tyrant of my thought  
Be another soul that still  
Holds dominion o'er the will ;  
That would refuse, but can no more,  
To bend, to tremble, and adore.  
Vain idolatry !—I saw,  
And gazing became blind with error ;  
Weak ambition, which the awe

Of her presence bound to terror !  
So beautiful she was—and I  
Between my love and jealousy,  
Am so convulsed with hope and fear,  
Unworthy as it may appear ;—  
So bitter is the life I live,  
That, hear me, Hell ! I now would  
give,

To thy most detested spirit  
My soul, for ever to inherit,  
To suffer punishment and pine,  
So this woman may be mine.  
Hear'st thou, Hell ! dost thou reject  
it ?

My soul is offered '

*Dæmon (unseen).* I accept it.  
[*Tempest with thunder and lightning.*

CYPRIAN.

What is this ! ye heavens, for ever  
pure,  
At once intensely radiant and ob-  
scure !

Athwart the ethereal halls  
The lightning's arrow and the thun-  
der balls

The day affright,  
As from the horizon round,  
Burst with earthquake sound,  
In mighty torrents the electric foun-  
tains :—

Clouds quench the sun, and thunde-  
r smoke

Strangles the air, and fire eclipses  
heaven.

Philosophy, thou canst not even  
Compel their causes underneath thy  
yoke,

From yonder clouds even to the waves  
below

The fragments of a single ruin choke  
Imagination's flight ;

For, on flakes of surge, like feathers  
light,

The ashes of the desolation cast  
Upon the gloomy blast,

Tell of the footsteps of the storm ;  
And nearer see the melancholy form

Of a great ship, the outcast of the sea,  
Drives miserably !

And it must fly the pity of the port,  
Or perish, and its last and sole resort

Is its own raging enemy.  
The terror of the thrilling cry

Was a fatal prophecy  
Of coming death, who hovers now



Upon that shattered prow,  
That they who died not may be dying  
still.

And not alone the insane elements  
Are populous with wild portents,  
But that sad ship is as a miracle  
Of sudden ruin, for it drives so fast  
It seems as if it had arrayed its form  
With the headlong storm.  
It strikes—I almost feel the shock,—  
It stumbles on a jagged rock,—  
Sparkles of blood on the white foam  
are cast.

[*A tempest—All exclaim within.*  
We are all lost!

*Dæmon (within).* Now from this  
plank will I  
Pass to the land, and thus fulfil my  
scheme.

*Cyprian.* As in contempt of the  
elemental rage  
A man comes forth in safety, while  
the ship's

Great form is in a watery eclipse  
Obliterated from the ocean's page,  
And round its wreck the huge sea  
monsters sit,

A horrid conclave, and the whistling  
wave

Is heaped over its carcase, like a  
grave.

*The DÆMON enters, as escaped from the  
sea.*

*Dæmon (aside).* It was essential to  
my purposes  
To wake a tumult on the sapphire  
ocean,

That in this unknown form I might  
at length

Wipe out the blot of the discomfiture  
Sustained upon the mountain, and  
assail

With a new war the soul of Cyprian,  
Forging the instruments of his des-  
truction

Even from his love and from his wis-  
dom.—O

Beloved earth, dear mother, in thy  
bosom

I seek a refuge from the monster who  
Precipitates itself upon me.

*Cyprian.* Friend,  
Collect thyself; and be the memory  
Of thy late suffering, and thy greatest  
sorrow

But as a shadow of the past,—for  
nothing

Beneath the circle of the moon but  
flows

And changes, and can never know  
repose.

*Dæmon.* And who art thou, before  
whose feet my fate

Has prostrated me?

*Cyprian.* One who, moved with  
pity,

Would sooth its stings.

*Dæmon.* Oh! that can never be!  
No solace can my lasting sorrows find.

*Cyprian.* Wherefore?

*Dæmon.* Because my happi-  
ness is lost. [be

Yet I lament what has long ceased to  
The object of desire or memory,  
And my life is not life.

*Cyprian.* Now, since the fury  
Of this earthquaking hurricane is still,  
And the crystalline heaven has re-  
assumed

Its windless calm so quickly, that it  
seems

As if its heavy wrath had been awak-  
ened

Only to overwhelm that vessel,—  
speak,

Who art thou, and whence comest  
thou?

*Dæmon.* Far more  
My coming hither cost than thou hast  
seen,

Or I can tell. Among my misadven-  
tures

This shipwreck is the least. Wilt  
thou hear?

*Cyprian.* Speak.

*Dæmon.* Since thou desirest, I will  
then unveil

Myself to thee;—for in myself I am  
A world of happiness and misery;  
This I have lost, and that I must  
lament

Forever. In my attributes I stood  
So high and so heroically great,  
In lineage so supreme, and with a  
genius

Which penetrated with a glance the  
world

Beneath my feet, that won by my  
high merit

A king—whom I may call the King of  
kings,

Because all others tremble in their  
 pride  
 Before the terrors of his countenance,  
 In his high palace roofed with bright-  
 est gems  
 Of living light—call them the stars of  
 Heaven—  
 Named me his counsellor. But the  
 high praise  
 Stung me with pride and envy, and I  
 rose  
 In mighty competition, to ascend  
 His seat, and place my foot trium-  
 phantly  
 Upon his subject thrones. Chastised,  
 I know  
 The depth to which ambition falls;  
 too mad  
 Was the attempt, and yet more mad  
 were now  
 Repentance of the irrevocable deed:—  
 Therefore I chose this ruin with the  
 glory  
 Of not to be subdued, before the  
 shame  
 Of reconciling me with him who reigns  
 By coward cession.—Nor was I alone,  
 Nor am I now, nor shall I be alone;  
 And there was hope, and there may  
 still be hope,  
 For many suffrages among his vassals  
 Hailed me their lord and king, and  
 many still  
 Are mine, and many more perchance  
 shall be.  
 Thus vanquished, though in fact vic-  
 torious,  
 I left his seat of empire, from mine eye  
 Shooting forth poisonous lightning,  
 while my words  
 With inauspicious thunderings shook  
 Heaven,  
 Proclaiming vengeance, public as my  
 wrong,  
 And imprecating on his prostrate  
 slaves  
 Rapine, and death, and outrage.  
 Then I sailed  
 Over the mighty fabric of the world,  
 A pirate ambushed in its pathless  
 sands,  
 A lynx crouched watchfully among  
 its caves  
 And craggy shores; and I have wan-  
 dered over  
 The expanse of these wild wildernesses

In this great ship, whose bulk is now  
 dissolved  
 In the light breathings of the invisible  
 wind,  
 And which the sea has made a dust-  
 less ruin,  
 Seeking over a mountain, through  
 whose forests  
 I seek a man, whom I must now  
 compel  
 To keep his word with me. I came  
 arrayed  
 In tempest, and, although my power  
 could well  
 Bridle the forest winds in their  
 career—  
 For other causes I forbore to soothe  
 Their fury to Favonian gentleness;  
 I could and would not: (thus I wake  
 in him *[Aside.*  
 A love of magic art.) Let not this  
 tempest,  
 Nor the succeeding calm excite thy  
 wonder;  
 For by my art the sun would turn as  
 pale *[fear;*  
 As his weak sister with unwonted  
 And in my wisdom are the orbs of  
 Heaven  
 Written as in a record. I have  
 pierced  
 The flaming circles of their wondrous  
 spheres,  
 And know them as thou knowest  
 every corner  
 Of this dim spot. Let it not seem to  
 thee  
 That I boast vainly; wouldst thou  
 that I work  
 A charm over this waste and savage  
 wood,  
 This Babylon of crags and aged trees,  
 Filling its leafy coverts with a horror  
 Thrilling and strange? I am the  
 friendless guest  
 Of these wild oaks and pines—and as  
 from thee  
 I have received the hospitality  
 Of this rude place, I offer thee the  
 fruit  
 Of years of toil in recompense; what-  
 e'er  
 Thy wildest dream presented to thy  
 thought  
 As object of desire, that shall be thine.

\* \* \* \*

And thenceforth shall so firm an  
 amity  
 'Twixt thou and me be, that neither  
 fortune,  
 The monstrous phantom which pur-  
 sues success,  
 That careful miser, that free prodigal,  
 Who ever alternates with changeful  
 hand  
 Evil and good, reproach and fame;  
 nor Time,  
 That lodestar of the ages, to whose  
 beam  
 The winged years speed o'er the in-  
 tervals  
 Of their unequal revolutions; nor  
 Heaven itself, whose beautiful bright  
 stars  
 Rule and adorn the world, can ever  
 make  
 The least division between thee and  
 me,  
 Since now I find a refuge in thy favour.

SCENE III. — *The DÆMON tempts  
 JUSTINA, who is a Christian.*

*Dæmon.* Abyss of Hell! I call on  
 thee,  
 Thou wilt misrule of thine own an-  
 archy!  
 From thy prison-house set free  
 The spirits of voluptuous death,  
 That with their mighty breath  
 They may destroy a world of virgin  
 thoughts;  
 Let her chaste mind with fancies  
 thick as motes  
 Be peopled from thy shadowy deep,  
 Till her guiltless phantasy  
 Full to overflowing be!  
 And, with sweetest harmony,  
 Let birds, and flowers, and leaves,  
 and all things move  
 To love, only to love.  
 Let nothing meet her eyes  
 But signs of Love's soft victories;  
 Let nothing meet her ear  
 But sounds of Love's sweet sorrow;  
 So that from faith no succour may  
 she borrow  
 But, guided by my spirit blind,  
 And in a magic snare entwined,  
 She may now seek Cyprian,  
 Begin, while I in silence bind

My voice, when thy sweet song thou  
 hast begun.

*A Voice within.* What is the glory  
 far above

All else in human life?

*All.* Love! love!

*[While these words are sung, the  
 DÆMON goes out at one door,  
 and JUSTINA enters at another.]*

*The First Voice.* There is no form  
 in which the fire

Of love its traces has impressed not.

Man lives far more in love's desire

Than by life's breath soon possessed  
 not.

If all that lives must love or die,

All shapes on earth, or sea, or sky,

With one consent to Heaven cry

That the glory far above

All else in life is—

*All.* Love! O love!

*Justina.* Thou melancholy thought,  
 which art

So fluttering and so sweet, to thee

When did I give the liberty

Thou to afflict my heart?

What is the cause of this new power

Which doth my fevered being move,

Momently raging more and more?

What subtle pain is kindled now

Which from my heart doth overflow

Into my senses?—

*All.* Love! O love!

*Justina.* 'Tis that enamoured  
 nightingale

Who gives me the reply:

He ever tells the same soft tale

Of passion and of constancy

To his mate, who, rapt and fond,

Listening sits, a bough beyond,

Be silent, nightingale!—No more

Make me think, in hearing thee

Thus tenderly thy love deplore,

If a bird can feel his so,

What a man would feel for me.

And, voluptuous vine, O thou

Who seekest most when least pursu-  
 ing,—

To the trunk thou interlacest

Art the verdure which embracest,

And the weight which is its ruin,—

No more, with green embraces vine,

Make me think on what thou lovest,—

For whilst thou thus thy boughs en-  
 twine.

I fear lest thou shouldst teach me, so-  
phist,  
How arms might be entangled too.

Light-enchanted sunflower, thou  
Who gazest ever true and tender  
On the sun's revolving splendour;  
Follow not his faithless glance  
With thy faded countenance,  
Nor teach my beating heart to fear,  
If leaves can mourn without a tear,  
How eyes must weep! O nightin-  
gale,  
Cease from thy enamoured tale,—  
Leafy vine, unwreath thy bower,  
Restless sunflower, cease to move,—  
Or tell me all what poisonous power  
Ye use against me.

*All.* Love! love! love!

*Justina.* It cannot be! Whom  
have I ever loved?

Trophies of my oblivion and disdain,  
Floro and Lelio did I not reject?  
And Cyprian?—

[*She becomes troubled at the name  
of CYPRIAN.*

Did I not requite him  
With such severity, that he has fled  
Where none has ever heard of him  
again?—

Alas! I now begin to fear that this  
May be the occasion whence desire  
grows bold,

As if there were no danger. From  
the moment

That I pronounced to my own listen-  
ing heart,

"Cyprian is absent," O miserable me!  
I know not what I feel! [*More calmly.*

It must be pity  
To think that such a man, whom all  
the world

Admired, should be forgot by all the  
world,

And I the cause.

[*She again becomes troubled.*

And yet if it were pity,  
Floro and Lelio might have equal  
share,

For they are both imprisoned for my  
sake. [*Calmly.*

Alas! what reasonings are these? It is  
Enough I pity him, and that, in vain,  
Without this ceremonious subtlety.  
And woe is me! I know not where to  
find him now,

Even should I seek him through this  
wide world.

*Enter DÆMON.*

*Dæmon.* Follow, and I will lead  
thee where he is.

*Justina.* And who art thou, who  
hast found entrance hither,  
Into my chamber, through the doors  
and locks?

Art thou a monstrous shadow which  
my madness

Has formed in the idle air?

*Dæmon.* No. I am one  
Called by the thought which tyrann-  
izes thee

From his eternal dwelling; who this  
day

Is pledged to bear thee unto Cyprian.

*Justina.* So shall thy promise fail.  
This agony

Of passion which afflicts my heart  
and soul,

May sweep imagination in its storm;  
The will is firm.

*Dæmon.* Already half is done  
In the imagination of an act.

The sin incurred, the pleasure then  
remains;

Let not the will stop half-way on the  
road.

*Justina.* I will not be discouraged,  
nor despair,

Although I thought it, and although  
'tis true

The thought is but a prelude to the  
deed:—

Thought is not in my power, but  
action is,

I will not move my foot to follow  
thee.

*Dæmon.* But a far mightier wis-  
dom than mine own

Exerts itself within thee, with such  
power [*clines*

Compelling thee to that which it in-  
That it shall force thy step; how wilt  
thou then

Resist, *Justina*?

*Justina.* By my free will.

*Dæmon.* I  
Must force thy will.

*Justina.* It is invincible;  
It were not free if thou hadst power  
upon it.

[*He draws, but cannot move her.*

*Damon.* Come, where a pleasure  
waits thee.

*Justina.* It were bought  
Too dear.

*Damon.* 'Twill soothe thy heart to  
softest peace.

*Justina.* 'Tis dread captivity.

*Damon.* 'Tis joy, 'tis glory.

*Justina.* 'Tis shame, 'tis torment,  
'tis despair.

*Damon.* But how  
Canst thou defend thyself from that  
or me,

If my power drags thee onward ?

*Justina.* My defence  
Consists in God.

[*He vainly endeavours to force her, and  
at last releases her.*]

*Damon.* Woman, thou hast sub-  
dued me,  
Only by not owning thyself subdued.  
But since thou thus findest defence in  
God,

I will assume a feigned form, and thus  
Make thee a victim of my baffled rage.  
For I will mask a spirit in thy form  
Who will betray thy name to infamy,  
And doubly shall I triumph in thy  
loss,

First by dishonouring thee, and then  
by turning  
False pleasure to true ignominy.

[*Exit.*]

*Justina.* I  
Appeal to Heaven against thee ! so  
that Heaven

May scatter thy delusions, and the  
blot

Upon my name vanish in idle thought,  
Even as flame dies in the envious  
air,

And as the flow'ret wanes at morning  
frost,

And thou shouldst never——But,  
alas ! to whom

Do I still speak ?—Did not a man but  
now

Stand here before me ?—No, I am  
And yet I saw him. Is he gone so  
quickly ?

Or can the heated mind engender  
shapes

From its own fear ? Some terrible  
and strange

Peril is near. *Lisander ! father !  
lord !*

*Livia !—*

*Enter LISANDER and LIVIA.*

*Lisander.* O my daughter ! what ?

*Livia.* What ?

*Justina.* Saw you  
A man go forth from my apartment  
now ?—

I scarce sustain myself !

*Lisander.* A man here !

*Justina.* Have you not seen him ?

*Livia.* No, lady.

*Justina.* I saw him.

*Lisander.* 'Tis impossible ; the  
doors

Which led to this apartment were all  
locked.

*Livia (aside).* I dare say it was  
Moscon whom she saw,  
For he was locked up in my room.

*Lisander.* It must  
Have been some image of thy phan-  
tasy.

Such melancholy as thou feedest is  
Skilful in forming such in the vain air  
Out of the motes and atoms of the  
day.

*Livia.* My master's in the right.

*Justina.* Oh, would it were  
Delusion ! but I fear some greater ill.  
I feel as if out of my bleeding bosom  
My heart was torn in fragments ; ay,  
Some mortal spell is wrought against  
my frame ;

So potent was the charm, that had  
not God

Shielded my humble innocence from  
wrong.

I should have sought my sorrow and  
my shame

With willing steps.—*Livia,* ' quick,  
bring my cloak,

For I must seek refuge from these ex-  
tremes

Even in the temple of the highest God  
Which secretly the faithful worship.

*Livia.* Here.

*Justina (putting on her cloak).* In  
this, as in a shroud of snow, may I  
Quench the consuming fire in which I  
burn,

Wasting away !

*Lisander.* And I will go with thee.

*Livia.* When I once see them safe  
out of the house,  
I shall breathe freely.

*Justina.* So do I confide  
In thy just favour, Heaven!

*Lisander.* Let us go.

*Justina.* Thine is the cause, great  
God! Turn, for my sake  
And for thine own, mercifully to me!

# SCENES FROM THE "FAUST" OF GOETHE

## • PROLOGUE IN HEAVEN

*The Lord and the Host of Heaven.*

*Enter Three Archangels.*

**RAPHAEL.**

THE sun makes music as of old  
Amid the rival spheres of Heaven,  
On its predestined circle rolled  
With thunder speed: the Angels  
even

Draw strength from gazing on its  
glance,  
Though none its meaning fathom  
may;—

The world's unwithered countenance  
Is bright as at creation's day.

**GABRIEL.**

And swift and swift, with rapid light-  
ness,

The adorned Earth spins silently,  
Alternating Elysian brightness

With deep and dreadful night; the  
sea

Foams in broad billows from the deep  
Up to the rocks; and rocks and  
ocean,

Onward, with spheres which never  
sleep,

Are hurried in eternal motion.

**MICHAEL.**

And tempests in contention roar  
From land to sea, from sea to land;

And, raging, weave a chain of power  
Which girds the earth as with a  
band,

A flashing desolation there  
Flames before the thunder's way;

But thy servants, Lord, revere  
The gentle changes of thy day.

**CHORUS OF THE THREE.**

The Angels draw strength from thy  
glance,

Though no one comprehend thee  
may;—

Thy world's unwithered countenance  
Is bright as on creation's day.<sup>1</sup>

*Enter MEPHISTOPHELES.*

*Mephistopheles.* As thou, O Lord,  
once more art kind enough  
To interest thyself in our affairs—  
And ask, "How goes it with you  
there below?"

And as indulgently at other times  
Thou tookdst not my visits in ill part,  
Thou seest me here once more among  
thy household.

Though I should scandalize this com-  
pany,

You will excuse me if I do not talk  
In the high style which they think  
fashionable;

My pathos certainly would make you  
laugh too,

Had you not long since given over  
laughing,

Nothing know I to say of suns and  
worlds;

<sup>1</sup> **RAPHAEL.**

The sun sounds, according to ancient custom,  
In the song of emulation of his brother-spheres,  
And its fore-written circle

Fulfills with a step of thunder.  
Its countenance gives the Angels strength,

Though no one can fathom it.  
The incredible high works

Are excellent as at the first day.

**GABRIEL.**

And swift, and inconceivably swift  
The adornment of earth winds itself round,  
And exchanges Paradise-clearness  
With deep dreadful night.

The sea foams in broad waves  
From its deep bottom up to the rocks,  
And rocks and sea are torn on together  
In the eternal swift course of the spheres.

**MICHAEL.**

And storms roar in emulation  
From sea to land, from land to sea,

And make, raging, a chain  
Of deepest operation round about.

There flames a flashing destruction  
Before the path of the thunderbolt.

But thy servants, Lord, revere  
The gentle alternations of thy day.

**CHORUS.**

Thy countenance gives the Angels strength,  
Though none can comprehend thee:

And all thy lofty works  
Are excellent as at the first day.

Such is the literal translation of this aston-  
ishing Chorus; it is impossible to represent in  
another language the melody of the versifica-  
tion; even the volatile strength and delicacy of  
the ideas escape in the crucible of translation,  
and the reader is surprised to find a *caput mor-  
tuum*.—*Author's Note.*

I observe only how men plague themselves ;—

The little god o' the world keeps the same stamp,

As wonderful as on creation's day :—

A little better would he live, hadst thou

Not given him a glimpse of Heaven's light

Which he calls reason, and employs it only

To live more beastily than any beast.

With reverence to your Lordship be it spoken,

He's like one of those long-legged grasshoppers,

Who flits and jumps about, and sings for ever

The same old song i' the grass. There let him lie, [dunc.

Burying his nose in every heap of

*The Lord.* Have you no more to say ? Do you come here

Always to scold, and cavil, and complain ?

Seems nothing ever right to you on earth ?

*Mephistopheles.* No, Lord ; I find all there, as ever, bad at best.

Even I am sorry for man's days of sorrow ;

I could myself almost give up the pleasure

Of plaguing the poor things.

*The Lord.* Knowest thou Faust ?

*Mephistopheles.* The Doctor ?

*The Lord.* Ay ; my servant Faust.

*Mephistopheles.* In truth

He serves you in a fashion quite his own,

And the fool's meat and drink are not of earth.

His aspirations bear him on so far That he is half aware of his own folly,

For he demands from Heaven its fairest star,

And from the earth the highest joy it bears ;

Yet all things far, and all things near, are vain

To calm the deep emotions of his breast.

*The Lord.* Though he now serves me in a cloud of error,

I will soon lead him forth to the clear day.

When trees look green, full well the gardener knows

That fruits and blooms will deck the coming year.

*Mephistopheles.* What will you bet ?—now I am sure of winning—

Only observe you give me full permission

To lead him softly on my path.

*The Lord.* As long

As he shall live upon the earth, so long

Is nothing unto thee forbidden.—Man Must err till he has ceased to struggle.

*Mephistopheles.* Thanks.

And that is all I ask ; for willingly

I never make acquaintance with the dead.

The full fresh cheeks of youth are food for me,

And if a corpse knocks, I am not at home.

For I am like a cat—I like to play A little with the mouse before I eat it.

*The Lord.* Well, well, it is permitted thee. Draw thou

His spirit from its springs ; as thou find'st power,

Seize him and lead him on thy downward path ;

And stand ashamed when failure teaches thee

That a good man, even in his darkest longings,

Is well aware of the right way.

*Mephistopheles.* Well and good.

I am not in much doubt about my bet

And, if I lose, then 'tis your turn to crow ;

Enjoy your triumph then with a full breast.

Ay ; dust shall he devour, and that with pleasure,

Like my old paramour, the famous Snake.

*The Lord.* Pray come here when it suits you ; for I never

Had much dislike for people of your sort.

And, among all the Spirits who rebelled,

The knave was ever the least tedious to me.

The active spirit of man soon sleeps, and soon

He seeks unbroken quiet ; therefore I  
 Have given him the Devil for a com-  
 panion,  
 Who may provoke him to some sort of  
 work,  
 And must create for ever.—But ye,  
 pure  
 Children of God, enjoy eternal  
 beauty;—  
 Let that which ever operates and  
 lives  
 Clasp you within the limits of its love ;  
 And seize with sweet and melancholy  
 thoughts  
 The floating phantoms of its loveli-  
 ness.  
*[Heaven closes ; the Archangels exeunt.*  
*Mephistopheles.* From time to time  
 I visit the old fellow,  
 And I take care to keep on good  
 terms with him.  
 Civil enough is this same God Al-  
 mighty,  
 To talk so freely with the Devil him-  
 self.

SCENE.—*May Day Night.—The Harz  
 Mountain, a desolate Country.*

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

*Mephistopheles.* Would you not  
 like a broomstick ? As for me  
 I wish I had a good stout ram to ride ;  
 For we are still far from th' appointed  
 place.

*Faust.* This knotted staff is help  
 enough for me,  
 Whilst I feel fresh upon my legs.  
 What good  
 Is there in making short a pleasant  
 way—  
 To creep along the labyrinths of the  
 vales,  
 And climb those rocks, where ever-  
 babbling springs  
 Precipitate themselves in waterfalls,  
 In the true sport that seasons such a  
 path ?  
 Already Spring kindles the birchen  
 spray,  
 And the hoar pines already feel her  
 breath :  
 Shall she not work also within our  
 limbs ?  
*Mephistopheles.* Nothing of such an  
 influence do I feel.

S.P.

My body is all wintry, and I wish  
 The flowers upon our path were frost  
 and snow.  
 But see, how melancholy rises now,  
 Dimly uplifting her belated beam,  
 The blank unwelcome round of the  
 red moon,  
 And gives so bad a light, that every  
 step  
 One stumbles 'gainst some crag. With  
 your permission  
 I'll call an *Ignis fatuus* to our aid :  
 I see one yonder burning jollily.  
 Halloo, my friend ! may I request  
 that you  
 Would favour us with your bright  
 company ?  
 Why should you blaze away there to  
 no purpose ?  
 Pray be so good as light us up this  
 way.  
*Ignis-fatuus.* With reverence be it  
 spoken, I will try  
 To overcome the lightness of my  
 nature ;  
 Our course, you know, is generally  
 zigzag.  
*Mephistopheles.* Ha, ha ! your wor-  
 ship thinks you have to deal  
 With men. Go straight on in the  
 Devil's name,  
 Or I shall puff your flickering life out.  
*Ignis fatuus.* Well,  
 I see you are the master of the house ;  
 I will accommodate myself to you.  
 Only consider that to-night this moun-  
 tain  
 Is all-enchanted, and if Jack-a-lantern  
 Shows you his way, though you  
 should miss your own,  
 You ought not to be too exact with  
 him.  
 FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, and IGNIS  
 FATUUS in alternate Chorus.  
 The limits of the sphere of dream,  
 The bounds of true and false, are  
 passed.  
 Lead us on, thou wandering Gleam,  
 Lead us onward far and fast,  
 To the wide, the desert waste.  
 But see, how swift advance and shift  
 Trees behind trees, row by row,—  
 How, clift by clift, rocks bend and  
 lift  
 Their frowning foreheads as we go.

M M



The giant-snouted crags, ho ! ho !  
How they snort, and how they  
blow !

Through the mossy sods and stones,  
Stream and streamlet hurry down,  
A rushing throng ! A sound of  
song

Beneath the vault of Heaven is  
blown !

Sweet notes of love, the speaking  
tones

Of this bright day, sent down to say  
That Paradise on Earth is known,  
Resound around, beneath, above ;  
All we hope and all we love  
Finds a voice in this blithe strain,  
Which wakens hill and wood and  
rill,

And vibrates far o'er field and vale,  
And which Echo, like the tale  
Of old times, repeats again.

To-whoo ! to-whoo ! near, nearer  
now

The sound of song, the rushing  
throng !

Are the screech, the lapwing, and  
the jay,

All awake as if 'twere day ?  
See, with long legs and belly wide,  
A salamander in the brake !

Every root is like a snake,  
And along the loose hill side,

With strange contortions through  
the night,

Curls, to seize or to affright ;  
And animated, strong, and many,

They dart forth polypus-antennæ,  
To blister with their poison spume

The wanderer. Through the dazzl-  
ing gloom

The many-coloured mice that  
thread

The dewy turf beneath our tread,  
In troops each other's motions

cross,  
Through the heath and through the  
moss ;

And in legions intertangled,  
The fireflies flit, and swarm, and

throng,  
Till all the mountain depths are  
spangled.

Tell me, shall we go or stay ?  
Shall we onward ? Come along !

Everything around is swept  
Forward, onward, far away !  
Trees and masses intercept  
The sight, and wisps on every side  
Are puffed up and multiplied.

*Mephistopheles.* Now vigorously  
seize my skirt, and gain

This pinnacle of isolated crag.

One may observe with wonder from  
this point

How Mammon glows among the  
mountains.

*Faust.*

Ay—

And strangely through the solid depth  
below

A melancholy light, like the red dawn,  
Shoots from the lowest gorge of the  
abyss

Of mountains, lighting hitherward ;  
there, rise

Pillars of smoke ; here, clouds float  
gently by ;

Here the light burns soft as the en-  
kindled air,

Or the illumined dust of golden  
flowers ;

And now it glides like tender colours  
spreading ;

And now bursts forth in fountains  
from the earth ;

And now it winds one torrent of broad  
Through the far valley with a hun-  
dred veins ;

And now once more within that nar-  
row corner

Masses itself into intensest splendour.  
And near us see sparks spring out of  
the ground,

Like golden sand scattered upon the  
darkness ;

The pinnacles of that black wall of  
mountains

That hems us in are kindled.

*Mephistopheles.* Rare, in faith !  
Does not Sir Mammon gloriously

illuminate  
His palace for this festival—it is

A pleasure which you had not known  
before.

I spy the boisterous guests already.

*Faust.*

How

The children of the wind rage in the  
air !

With what fierce strokes they fall  
upon my neck !

*Mephistopheles.* Cling tightly to  
the old ribs of the crag.  
Beware! for if with them thou war-  
rest  
In their fierce flight towards the  
wilderness,  
Their breath will sweep thee into dust,  
and drag  
Thy body to a grave in the abyss.  
A cloud thickens the night.  
Hark! how the tempest crashes  
through the forest!

The owls fly out in strange affright;  
The columns of the evergreen palaces  
Are split and shattered;  
The roots creak, and stretch, and  
groan;  
And, ruinously overthrown,  
The trunks are crushed and shat-  
tered  
By the fierce blast's unconquerable  
stress.  
Over each other crack and crash  
they all,  
In terrible and intertangled fall;  
And through the ruins of the shaken  
mountain

The airs hiss and howl—  
It is not the voice of the fountain,  
Nor the wolf in his midnight  
prowl.

Dost thou not hear?  
Strange accents are ringing  
Aloft, afar, anear;  
The witches are singing!  
The torrent of a raging wizard's  
song  
Streams the whole mountain  
along.

CHORUS OF WITCHES.  
The stubble is yellow, the corn is  
green.  
Now to the Brocken the witches go;  
The mighty multitude here may be  
seen  
Gathering, wizard and witch, below.  
Sir Urcan is sitting aloft in the air;  
Hey over stock! and hey over stone!  
'Twixt witches and incubi, what shall  
be done?

Tell it, who dare! tell it who dare!  
A Voice. Upon a sow-swine, whose  
farrows were nine,  
Old Baubo rideth alone.

## CHORUS.

Honour her to whom honour is due,  
Old mother Baubo, honour to you!  
An able sow with old Baubo upon her,  
Is worthy of glory, and worthy of  
honour!  
The legion of witches is coming be-  
hind,  
Darkening the night and outspeeding  
the wind—

A Voice. Which way comest thou?

A Voice. Over Ilsestein;  
The owl was awake in the white  
moonshine;

I saw her at rest in her downy nest,  
And she stared at me with her broad  
bright cyne.

Voices. And you may now as well  
take your course on to Hell,  
Since you ride by so fast on the head-  
long blast.

A Voice. She dropped poison upon  
me as I past.  
Here are the wounds—.

## CHORUS OF WITCHES.

Come away! come along!  
The way is wide, the way is long,  
But what is that for a Bedlam throng?  
Stick with the prong, and scratch  
with the broom.  
The child in the cradle lies strangled  
at home,  
And the mother is clapping her  
hands.—

## SEMI-CHORUS OF WIZARDS I.

We glide in  
Like snails when the women are all  
away;  
And from a house once given over to  
sin  
Woman has a thousand steps to stray.

## SEMI-CHORUS II.

A thousand steps must a woman take,  
Where a man but a single spring will  
make.

Voices above. Come with us, come  
with us, from Felunsee.

Voices below. With what joy would  
we fly through the upper sky;

We are washed, we are 'nointed, stark  
naked are we !  
But our toil and our pain are for ever  
in vain.

BOTH CHORUSES.

The wind is still, the stars are fled,  
The melancholy moon is dead ;  
The magic notes, like spark on spark,  
Drizzle, whistling through the dark.

Come away !

*Voices below.* Stay, oh stay !

*Voices above.* Out of the crannies  
of the rocks

Who calls ?

*Voices below.* O, let me join your  
flocks !

I, three hundred years have striven  
To catch your skirt and mount to  
Heaven,—

And still in vain. Oh, might I be  
With company akin to me !

BOTH CHORUSES.

Some on a rag and some on a prong,  
On poles and on broomsticks we  
flutter along ;  
Forlorn is the wight who can rise not  
to-night.

*A half-witch below.* I have been  
tripping this many an hour :

Are the others already so far before ?  
No quiet at home, and no peace  
abroad !

And less methinks is found by the  
road.

CHORUS OF WITCHES.

Come onward, away ! aoint thee,  
aoint !

A witch to be strong must aoint—  
aoint—

Then every trough will be boat  
enough :

With a rag for a sail we can sweep  
through the sky,

Who flies not to-night, when means  
he to fly ?

BOTH CHORUSES.

We cling to the skirt, and we strike  
on the ground ;

Witch legions thicken around and  
around ;

Wizard swarms cover the heath all  
over.

[*They descend.*]

*Mephistopheles.* What\* thronging,  
dashing, raging, rustling !

What whispering, babbling, hissing,  
bustling !

What glimmering, spurting, stinking,  
burning !

As Heaven and earth were overturn-  
ing.

There is a true witch element about  
us ;

Take hold on me, or we shall be di-  
vided :—

Where are you ?

*Faust (from a distance).* Here !

*Mephistopheles.* What !

I must exert my authority in the  
house.

Place for young Volland ! Pray make  
way, good people.

Take hold on me, doctor, and with one  
step

Let us escape from this unpleasant  
crowd :

They are too mad for people of my  
sort. [light—

Just there shines a peculiar kind of  
Something attracts me in those  
bushes.—Come

This way ; we shall slip down there in  
a minute.

*Faust.* Spirit of Contradiction !

Well, lead on—

'Twere a wise feat indeed to wander  
out

Into the Brocken upon May Day night,  
And then to isolate oneself in scorn,  
Disgusted with the humours of the  
time.

*Mephistopheles.* See yonder, round  
a many-coloured flame

A merry club is huddled altogether ;  
Even with such little people as sit  
there

One would not be alone. °°

*Faust.* Would that I were

Up yonder in the glow and whirling  
smoke

Where the blind million rush impetu-  
ously

To meet the evil ones ; there might I  
solve

Many a riddle that torments me !

*Mephistopheles.* Yet

Many a riddle there is tied anew  
Inextricably. Let the great world  
rage !

We will stay here safe in the quiet dwellings.

'Tis an old custom. Men have ever built

Their own small world in the great world of all.

I see young witches naked there, and old ones

Wisely attired with greater decency.

Be guided now by me, and you shall buy

A pound of pleasure with a dram of trouble.

I hear them tune their instruments—one must

Get used to this damned scraping.

Come, I'll lead you

Among them; and what there you do and see,

As a fresh compact 'twixt us two shall be.

How say you now? this space is wide enough—

Look forth, you cannot see the end of it—

A hundred bonfires burn in rows, and they

Who throng around them seem innumerable:

Dancing and drinking, jabbering, making love,

And cooking, are at work. Now tell me, friend,

What is there better in the world than this?

*Faust.* In introducing us, do you assume

The character of wizard or of devil?

*Mephistopheles.* In truth, I generally go about

In strict incognito; and yet one likes to wear one's orders upon gala days.

I have no ribbon at my knee; but here

At home the cloven foot is honourable.

See you that snail there?—she comes creeping up,

And with her feeling eyes hath smelt out something:

I could not, if I would, mask myself here.

Come now we'll go about from fire to fire:

I'll be the pimp, and you shall be the lover.

[*To some old Women, who are sitting round a heap of glimmering coals.*]

Old gentlewomen, what do you do out here?

You ought to be with the young rioters

Right in the thickest of the revelry—

But every one is best content at home.

*General.* Who dare confide in right or a just claim?

So much as I had done for them!—and now—

With women and the people 'tis the same,

Youth will stand foremost ever,—age may go

To the dark grave unhonoured.

*Minister.* Nowadays

People assert their rights; they go too far;

But, as for me, the good old times I praise.

Then we were all in all; 'twas something worth

One's while to be in place and wear a star;

That was indeed the golden age on earth.

*Parvenu.*<sup>1</sup> We too are active, and we did and do

What we ought not perhaps; and yet we now

Will seize, whilst all things are whirled round and round,

A spoke of Fortune's wheel, and keep our ground.

*Author.* Who now can taste a treatise of deep sense

And ponderous volume? 'Tis impertinence

To write what none will read, therefore will I

To please the young and thoughtless people try.

*Mephistopheles.* (*Who at once appears to have grown very old.*)—

I find the people ripe for the last day,

Since I last came up to the wizard mountain;

<sup>1</sup> A sort of fundholder.

And as my little cask runs turbid now,  
So is the world drained to the dregs.

*Pedlar-witch.* Look here,  
Gentlemen; do not hurry on so fast,  
And lose the chance of a good penny-  
worth.

I have a pack full of the choicest  
wares

Of every sort, and yet in all my bundle  
Is nothing like what may be found on  
earth;

Nothing that in a moment will make  
rich

Men and the world with fine malicious  
mischief.—

There is no dagger drunk with blood;  
no bowl

From which consuming poison may  
be drained

By innocent and healthy lips; no  
jewel,

The price of an abandoned maiden's  
shame;

No sword which cuts the bond it can-  
not loose,

Or stabs the wearer's enemy in the  
back;

No—

*Mephistopheles.* Gossip, you know  
little of these times.

What has been, has been; what is  
done, is past.

They shape themselves into the inno-  
vations

They breed, and innovation drags us  
with it.

The torrent of the crowd sweeps over  
us:

You think to impel, and are yourself  
impelled.

*Faust.* Who is that yonder?

*Mephistopheles.* Mark her well. It  
is

Lilith.

*Faust.* Who?

*Mephistopheles.* Lilith, the first  
wife of Adam.

Beware of her fair hair, for she excels  
All women in the magic of her locks;  
And when she winds them round a  
young man's neck,  
She will not ever set him free again.

*Faust.* There sit a girl and an old  
woman—they  
Seems to be tired with pleasure and  
with play.

*Mephistopheles.* There is no rest to-  
night for anyone:

When one dance ends another is be-  
gun;

Come, let us do it. We shall have  
rare fun.

[*FAUST dances and sings with a Girl,  
and MEPHISTOPHELES with an old  
Woman.*]

*Procto-Phantasmist.* What is this  
cursed multitude about?

Have we not long since proved to  
demonstration

That 'ghosts move not on ordinary  
feet!

But these are dancing just like men  
and women.

*The Girl.* What does he want, then,  
at our ball?

*Faust.* Oh! he

Is far above us all in his conceit:

Whilst we enjoy, he reasons of enjoy-  
ment;

And any step which in our dance we  
tread,

If it be left out of his reckoning,  
Is not to be considered as a step.

There are few things that scandalize  
him not;

And, when you whirli round in the  
circle now,

As he went round the wheel in his old  
mill,

He says that you go wrong in all re-  
spects,

Especially if you congratulate him  
Upon the strength of the resem-  
blance.

*Procto-phantasmist.* Fly!

Vanish! Unheard of impudence!

What, still there!

In this enlightened age too, since you  
have been

Proved not to exist!—But this in-  
fernal brood

Will hear no reason and endure no  
rule.

Are we so wise, and is the pond still  
haunted?

How long have I been sweeping out  
this rubbish

Of superstition, and the world will not  
Come clean with all my pains!—it is  
a case

Unheard of!

*The Girl.* Then leave off teasing us so.

*Procto-phantasmist.* I tell you, spirits, to your faces now,  
That I should not regret this despo-  
isn't

Of spirits, but that mine can wield it not.

To-night I shall make poor work of it;  
Yet I will take a round with you, and hope

Before my last step in the living dance

To beat the poet and the devil together.

*Mephistopheles.* At last, he will sit down in some foul puddle—

That is his way of solacing himself,—  
Until some leech, diverted with his gravity,

Cures him of spirits and the spirit together.

[*To FAUST, who has seceded from the dance.*]

Why do you let that fair girl pass from you,

Who sang so sweetly to you in the dance?

*Faust.* A red mouse in the middle of her singing

Sprang from her mouth,

*Mephistopheles.* That was all right, my friend:

Be it enough that the mouse was not grey.

Do not disturb your hour of happiness

With close consideration of such trifles.

*Faust.* Then saw I—

*Mephistopheles.* What?

*Faust.* Seest thou not a pale fair girl, standing alone, far, far away?  
She drags herself now forward with slow steps,

And seems as if she moved with shackled feet:

I cannot overcome the thought that she

Is like poor Margaret.

*Mephistopheles.* Let it be—pass on—

No good can come of it—it is not well  
To meet it—it is an enchanted phan-  
tom,

A lifeless idol; with its numbing look,  
It freezes up the blood of man; and they

Who meet its ghastly stare are turned to stone,

Like those who saw Medusa.

*Faust.* O, too true!

Her eyes are like the eyes of a fresh corpse

Which ~~so~~ beloved hand has closed.  
Alas!

That is the breast which Margaret yielded to me—

Those are the lovely limbs which I enjoyed!

*Mephistopheles.* It is all magic, poor deluded fool!

She looks to everyone like his first love.

*Faust.* O what delight! what woe!  
I cannot turn

My looks from her sweet piteous countenance.

How strangely does a single blood-red line

Not broader than the sharp edge of a knife,

Adorn her lovely neck!

*Mephistopheles.* Ay, she can carry  
Her head under her arm upon occasion;

Perseus has cut it off for her. These pleasures

End in delusion,—Gain this rising ground;

It is as airy here as in a [ ]  
And, if I am not mightily deceived,  
I see a theatre.—What may this mean?

*Attendant.* Quite a new piece, the last of seven, for 'tis

The custom now to represent that number.

'Tis written by a Dilettante, and  
The actors who perform are Dilettanti;

Excuse me, gentlemen; but I must vanish.

I am a Dilettante curtain-lifter.



# INDEX TO FIRST LINES

	PAGE*		PAGE
A gentle story of two lovers young . . . . .	464	Come hither, my sweet Rosalind . . . . .	305
A glorious people vibrated again . . . . .	376	Corpses are cold in the tomb . . . . .	358
A man who was about to hang him- self . . . . .	515	Daughters of Jove, whose voice is melody . . . . .	502
A pale dream came to a Lady fair . . . . .	299	Dear Tom.—Allow me to request . . . . .	346
A portal as of shadowy adamant . . . . .	408	Death is here, and death is there . . . . .	403
A Sensitive Plant in a garden grew . . . . .	365	Do evil deeds thus quickly come and end? . . . . .	240
A widow bird sate mourning for her love . . . . .	449	“Do you not hear the Aziola cry? . . . . .	440
A woodman whose rough heart was out of tune . . . . .	336	Eagle! why soarest thou above that tomb? . . . . .	515
Alas! good friends, what profit can you see . . . . .	407	Faint with love, the Lady of the South . . . . .	472
Amid the desolation of a city . . . . .	408	False friend, wilt thou smile or weep . . . . .	247
An on the guests who often staid . . . . .	353	Far, far away, O ye . . . . .	432
An old, mad, blind, despised, and dying king . . . . .	359	Flourishing vine, whose kindling clusters glow . . . . .	468
And if my grief should still be dearer to me . . . . .	448	From all the blasts of heaven thou hast descended . . . . .	175
And like a dying lady, lean and pale . . . . .	385	From the forests and highlands . . . . .	383
And Peter Bell when he had been . . . . .	348	God prosper, speed, and save . . . . .	360
And where is truth? On tombs? for such to thee . . . . .	465	Good-night? ah, no; the hour is ill . . . . .	444
And, who feels discord now or sorrow . . . . .	464	Grant me your patience, gentlemen and boars . . . . .	279
Arethusa arose . . . . .	381	Great Spirit whom the sea of boundless thought . . . . .	472
Ariel to Miranda:—Take . . . . .	446	Guido, I would that Lappo, thou and I . . . . .	516
Arise, arise, arise! . . . . .	360	Hail to thee, blithe spirit! . . . . .	374
Art thou pale for weariness . . . . .	403	He came like a dream in the dawn of life . . . . .	448
As a violet's gentle eye . . . . .	432	He wanders, like a day appearing dream . . . . .	466
As from an ancestral oak . . . . .	359	Hell is a city much like London . . . . .	350
As I lay asleep in Italy . . . . .	341	Here lieth one whose name was writ on water! . . . . .	466
Away! the moor is dark beneath the moon . . . . .	288	Here, my dear friend, is a new book for you . . . . .	463
Before those cruel twins, whom at one birth . . . . .	391	Her voice did quiver as we parted . . . . .	304
Beside the dimness of the glimmer- ing sea . . . . .	104		
Best and brightest, come away . . . . .	449		
Bright wanderer, fair coquette of heaven . . . . .	486		
Cameleons feed on light and air . . . . .	363		
Come, be happy!—sit near me . . . . .	337		



	PAGE		PAGE
Honey from silkworms who can gather . . . . .	304	Madonna, wherefore hast thou sent to me . . . . .	431
How, my dear Mary, are you critic- bitten . . . . .	390	Many a green isle needs must be . . . . .	322
How sweet it is to sit and read the tales . . . . .	465	Men of England, wherefore plough Mine eyes were dim with tears unshed . . . . .	359 433
How wonderful is death . . . . .	1	Monarch of Gods and Dæmons, and all Spirits . . . . .	162
I am afraid these verses will not please you, but . . . . .	472	Music, when soft voices die . . . . .	433
I am drunk with the honey wine . . . . .	464	My dearest Mary, wherefore hast thou gone . . . . .	465
I arise from dreams of thee . . . . .	442	My faint spirit was sitting in the light . . . . .	431
I bring fresh showers for the thirst- ing flowers . . . . .	373	My head is wild with weeping for a grief . . . . .	468
I dreamed that as I wandered by the way . . . . .	383	My lost William, thou in whom . . . . .	364
I faint ! I perish with my love ! I grow . . . . .	472	No access to the Duke ! You have not said . . . . .	468
I fear thy kisses, gentle maiden . . . . .	376	Nor happiness, nor majesty, nor fame . . . . .	435
I hated thee, fallen tyrant ! I did groan . . . . .	288	Now the last day of many days . . . . .	450
I love—alas ! our life is love . . . . .	339	O Bacchus, what a world of toil, both now . . . . .	593
I met a traveller from an antique land . . . . .	302	O ! Foster-nurse of man's aban- doned glory . . . . .	310
I pant for the music which is divine . . . . .	442	O Mary dear, that you were here . . . . .	338
I rode one evening with Count Maddalo . . . . .	326	O memory ! permit it not . . . . .	521
" I sate beside the steersman then, and, gazing . . . . .	122	O mighty mind, in whose deep stream this age . . . . .	467
I sing the glorious Power with azure eyes . . . . .	501	" O that mine enemy had written . . . . .	351
I stood within the city disinterred . . . . .	404	O thou immortal deity . . . . .	466
I weep for Adonais—he is dead ! . . . . .	421	O thou, who plumed with strong desire . . . . .	384
I would not be a King—enough . . . . .	466	O Universal mother, who dost keep O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being . . . . .	302 361
If I walk in Autumn's even . . . . .	435	O world ! O life ! O time ! . . . . .	441
In the cave which wild weeds cover . . . . .	465	Offspring of Jove, Calliope, once more . . . . .	502
In the sweet solitude of the calm place . . . . .	516	Oh ! there are spirits in the air . . . . .	287
Is it a party in a parlour . . . . .	346	Old winter was gone . . . . .	439
It is the day when all the Sons of God . . . . .	469	One sung of thee who left the tale untold . . . . .	465
It lieth, gazing on the midnight sky . . . . .	363	One word is too often profaned . . . . .	442
It was a bright and cheerful after- noon . . . . .	406	Orphan hours, the year is dead . . . . .	444
Kissing Helena, together . . . . .	515	Our boat is asleep on Serchio's stream . . . . .	439
Lift not the painted veil which those who live . . . . .	341	Over the utmost hill at length I sped . . . . .	91
Like the ghost of a dear friend dead . . . . .	408	Palace-roof of cloudless night ! . . . . .	361
Listen, listen, Mary mine . . . . .	338	Pan loved his neighbour Echo—but that child . . . . .	516
Lo, Peter, in Hell's Grosvenor- square . . . . .	351		

	PAGE		PAGE
Peter Bells, one, two and three . . .	347	The fierce beasts of the woods and	
Place for the Marshal of the Masque	472	wildernesses . . . . .	468
Poet of Nature, thou hast wept to		The fiery mountains answer each	
know . . . . .	289	other . . . . .	407
Prince Athanase had one beloved		The fitful alternations of the rain .	466
friend . . . . .	296	The flower that smiles to-day . .	435
		The fountains mingle with the river	376
Rarely, rarely comest thou . . .	433	The golden gates of sleep unbar .	443
Reach me that handkerchief!—My		The good die first . . . . .	37
brain is hurt . . . . .	222	The keen stars were twinkling .	462
Rome has fallen, ye see it lying .	466	The old man took the oars, and	
Rough wind, that moanest loud .	451	soon the bark . . . . .	84
		The pale, the cold, and the moony	
Sacred Goddess, Mother Earth .	385	smile . . . . .	286
She comes not ; yet I left her even		The rose that drinks the fountain	
now . . . . .	231	dew . . . . .	302
She left me at the silent time . .	462	The rude wind is singing . . . .	466
She saw me not—she heard me not		The serpent is shut out from para-	
—alone . . . . .	145	dise . . . . .	441
Silence ! Of well are Death and		The sleepless Hours who watch me	
Sleep and Thou . . . . .	467	as I lie . . . . .	382
Sing, Muse, the son of Maia and of		The swifter spreads her web . . .	385
Jove . . . . .	486	whether she be . . . . .	385
"Sleep, sleep on ! forget thy pain ;	446	The star-light smile of children, the	
So now my summer task is ended,		sweet looks . . . . .	68
Mary . . . . .	54	The sun is set ; the swallows are	
So we sate joyous as the morning		asleep . . . . .	434
ray . . . . .	115	The sun is warm, the sky is clear .	339
Such was Zonoras ; and as daylight		The transport of a fierce and mon-	
finds . . . . .	207	strous gladness . . . . .	450
Summer was dead and Autumn		The Warm sun is failing, the bleak	
was expiring . . . . .	441	wind is wailing . . . . .	407
Sweet Spirit ! Sister of that orphan		The waters are flashing . . . .	434
one . . . . .	410	The wind has swept from the wide	
Swift as a spirit hastening to his		atmosphere . . . . .	285
task . . . . .	451	The world is dreary . . . . .	465
Swifter far than summer's flight .	442	There is a warm and gentle atmo-	
Swiftly walk over the western wave,	431	sphere . . . . .	465
		There is no danger to a Man, that	
Tell me, thou star, whose wings of		knows . . . . .	54
light . . . . .	407	There is no work, nor device, nor	
That matter of the murder is		knowledge . . . . .	286
hushed up . . . . .	209	There late was One, within whose	
* That night we anchored in a		subtle being . . . . .	289
wood-bay . . . . .	128	There was a little lawny islet . .	450
That time I died for ever, child .	304	There was a power in this sweet	
The awful shadow of some unseen		place . . . . .	367
Power . . . . .	290	There was a youth, who, as with	
The babe is at peace within the		toil and travel . . . . .	294
womb . . . . .	467	These are two friends whose lives	
The cold earth slept below . . .	287	were undivided . . . . .	467
The colour from the flower is gone.	338	They die—the dead return not—	
The Devil, I safely can aver . .	349	Misery . . . . .	301
The Devil now knew his proper cue	357	They were two cousins, almost like	
The everlasting universe of things.	291	two twins . . . . .	443

	PAGE		PAGE
Thou art fair, and few are fairer . . .	363	What ! alive and so bold, O Earth ?	434
Thou art the wine whose drunken- ness is all . . . . .	299	What art thou, Presumptuous, who profanest . . . . .	466
Thou supreme Goddess ! by whose power divine . . . . .	271	What men gain fairly—that they should possess . . . . .	466
Thou wert not, Cassius, and thou couldst not be . . . . .	467	What thoughts had sway o'er Cythna's lonely slumber . . . .	78
Thou wert the morning star among the living . . . . .	515	When a lover clasps his fairest . .	465
Three days the flowers of the garden fair . . . . .	368	When passion's trance is overpast .	443
Thus to be lost and thus to sink and die . . . . .	361	When soft winds and sunny skies .	467
Thy country's curse is on thee, darkest crest . . . . .	303	When the lamp is shattered . . .	446
Thy little footsteps on the sands .	464	When the last hope of trampled France has failed . . . . .	57
'Tis the terror of tempest. The rags of the sail . . . . .	370	When winds that move not its calm surface sweep . . . . .	515
'Twas as the season when the Earth upsprings . . . . .	298	Where art thou, beloved To-mor- row ? . . . . .	439
Unfathomable Sea ! whose waves years . . . . .	341	Where has he of grace divine . . .	504
Voice of Unseen spirits . . . . .	195	Whether the Sensitive Plant, or that . . . . .	370
Wake the serpent not—lest he . .	466	Whose is the love that, gleaming through the world . . . . .	1
Was there a human spirit in the steed . . . . .	135	Wild, pale, and wonder-stricken, even as one . . . . .	435
We are as clouds that veil the mid- night moon . . . . .	286	Wilt thou forget the happy hours .	340
We meet not as we parted . . . .	486	Ye congregated powers of heaven who share . . . . .	186
We strew these opiate flowers . . .	253	Ye gentle visitations of calm thought— . . . . .	465
Weep not, my gentle boy ; he struck but me . . . . .	216	Ye hasten to the dead ! What seek ye there . . . . .	409
		Ye wild-eyed Muses, sing, ye Twins of Jove . . . . .	501





